THE COMMONWEAL

A Weekly Review of Literature, The Arts and Public Affairs

Volume XIV | New York, Wednesday, October 14, 1931 | Number 24

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Previous issues of THE COMMONWEAL are indexed in the *Readers' Guide* and the *Catholic Periodical Index*.
Published weekly and copyrighted 1931, in the United States by the Calvert Publishing Corporation, Grand Central Terminal, New York, N. Y. United States: $5.00; Foreign: $6.00; Canada: $5.50. Single Copies: $.10.

THE CRUSADE OF MERCY

AGAIN the Pope has spoken, and his words are heard throughout the world. He addresses himself to the bishops of the Catholic Church, and, through them, the priests and the laity of the religion professed by more than three hundred millions of people belonging to all the races and nations of mankind. "New things are impending," he writes in the first words of his message (for so the Latin phrase, "Nova Impendet," is rendered in the Associated Press report). It is a new plague which comes, the "steady, frightening progress" of unemployment in every land. It has smitten "a great portion of the flock entrusted to our care, striking more cruelly the weaker though the more strongly loved—the children, the humble and those with less money, the workers and the proletariat." And it is foreseen that as "winter approaches and with it the long succession of suffering and privation which that season brings, especially to the poor and to the helpless young," there will be "a steady aggregation of the plague of unemployment," and that "the want of so many families and of their children, if not provided for, threatens to push them (which may God avert) to the point of exasperation."

Therefore, the Catholic world is summoned to "a crusade of charity and relief," a crusade which "while it will provide assistance to the body will also give comfort and aid to the soul, creating again a serene confidence; disencumbering the mind of those ugly thoughts which misery implants in the bosom of men."

It is of course the bishops who are summoned to lead this crusade. They are instructed to do three things: first, "both by preaching and the press" to act as the points of union for the charity and generosity of the faithful in feeding the hungry, clothing the naked, and sheltering the homeless, succoring the victims of the universal plague of unemployment: which is the immediate, pressing, not-to-be-neglected primary duty of the hour; second, and again "both by preaching and the press," the bishops should urge the cause of disarmament, because "the unbridled race for armaments is on the one hand the effect of the rivalry among nations, and on the other the cause of the withdrawal of enormous sums from the public wealth, and hence not the smallest of contributions to the current extraordinary crisis"; third, prayer, and particularly that most practical form of prayer, which is self-sacrifice, must be urged from every parish church in all the world.

It is of the utmost significance that the Pope should,

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in this urgent call to the new crusade of charity, have concentrated his attention, and the attention of the world, upon disarmament. Not that he does not recognize fully the many other factors of the world crisis. His recent encyclical letter on the economic situation sufficiently proves his knowledge, and his possession of the basic remedy. But now comes a crisis. A palliative must be applied, at once, without hesitation. Treatment of the ultimate causes of the world disease must not be abandoned as hopeless—of course not—but the greatest task is the immediate one of direct charity, and of removing the horrible menace and the crushing weight of war preparations.

It is quite certain that the Head of the Catholic Church expects, indeed that he urges, his bishops to do more than simply to pass on his words to their pastors and their own laity. Nothing is more obvious than the fact that none of the governments of the nations today are controlled, or indeed are even much influenced by, Catholics, or Catholic ideas. Yet it is these governments which must, if the peoples they govern so will it, either reduce their armaments, or press on toward the wars which are bound to come unless their methods change. And the Pope calls upon his bishops, exhorting them "that with all the means at your disposal, both by preaching and by the press, you seek to illumine minds and open hearts according to the solid dictates of right reason and of the Christian law."

The Head of the Church, therefore, has called the Church into action, not only to act within its limits of direct membership, but also to act directly upon the world of which it is a part. We for our part expect a great response. We look forward with particular hope to the meeting of our American bishops next month in Washington. Not since their meeting in 1919, at the close of the World War, have they come together amid such circumstances of crisis. Leadership will be given then to the American army of the world-wide crusade of mercy, and American leadership, here, as elsewhere, cannot be without great effect upon the world.

WEEK BY WEEK

LEADERS of unmistakable dimensions are beginning to emerge. Germany, at the eleventh hour, brought forth Bruening. It begins to look as if the French have at last discovered a mentionable complement to Briand in M. Laval. But if a vote were taken among thoughtful citizens on the matter, the verdict would probably be that Mr. Ramsay MacDonald is the most glorious "find" of the crisis. Time was when he seemed to be merely chugging up hill with a great ideal. Labor had become vocal in him—labor which had nothing to gain from wars, which sat licking as many sores as once afflicted Job. But nobody suspected that Mr. MacDonald possessed so large an endowment of integrity and genius. During the past ten years, politics had become a business of collecting hurrahs, to be paid for at the statesman's leisure. But when the economic bottom fell out of Britain a month ago, Mr. MacDonald went out to gather jeers and curses. Armed with them, he set about trying to help the nation rather than his constituency, only to run smack into Conservatives whose awareness of reality was still so slight that they could suggest holding out, at this stage, for a protective tariff. How this cliff was circumvented, and how with the help of Mr. Snowden, the long-discussed plan of converting England's $10,000,000,000 war loan into paper carrying a lower rate of interest has been brought within an inch of success, form episodes in a political career the like of which we have not been privileged to see in a decade. Maybe the Lord will soon be merciful to the United States! Or is the appearance of men abroad, who by implication help to save us, everything we have a right to expect?

The Penitential Way

Hell in Harlan County

DURING the past ten years, ugly labor wars were talked of in the United States as so many vague episodes in ancient history. Here and there one was fought out on a small field, but the newspapers devoted more attention to campaigns in the Caucasus. Now comes the New York *Times* with a series of articles by Louis Stark anent the chaos in Harlan County, Kentucky; and we rub our eyes as if this were part of some incredible handwriting on the wall. Here is a district rich in the finest kind of coal, but hamstrung by industrial and transportation conditions. The mines earn little, when they earn at all. Wages are cut, men are out of work, a population of 60,000 people is thrown into a situation as akin to inferno as one can imagine. We shall not attempt to describe the picture of dire need, lawlessness, oppression, murder and hopeless industrial decadence which Mr. Stark has drawn. His articles cannot be quoted; they deserve reading in their entirety. And after one has read them the question presents itself: are we facing, in the present days of catastrophic business decline, a revival of unrest that may ultimately reach hitherto unknown dimensions? The answer to that query depends less upon any "luck" or natural economic trend upon which too many are now relying than upon willingness to see that industry is socially responsible for the nation as a whole. People will suffer, or even starve, for a cause; but they will not suffer and starve for long, unreasonably.

In the Same Boat

A PARALLEL dug up by the New York *Times* recently and printed on the editorial page, is so remarkable, and heartening too in the present world situation, that we cannot resist copying it here. The import of it is not that misery loves company—though this is undeniably true, and may be taken for what it is worth, as long as it does not vitiate enterprise and charity. To us the true import seems to be that the

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world does go on, even when it may seem that everything were about to break down and easy, cheerful, prosperous times were never to come again. That may be a rather round imponderable platitude, nevertheless, as in many a banal but good habit, there is no doubt something in it. The paragraphs printed by the *Times* are taken from *Harper's Weekly* of October 10, 1857, and are as follows: "It is a gloomy moment in history. Not for many years—not in the lifetime of most men who read this paper—has there been so much grave and deep apprehension. In our own country there is universal commercial prostration and panic and thousands of our poorest fellow citizens are turned out against the approaching winter without employment.

"IN FRANCE the political caldron seethes and bubbles with uncertainty. Russia hangs as usual like a cloud dark and silent upon the horizon of Europe; while all the energies, resources and influences of the British Empire are sorely tried, and are yet to be tried more sorely, in coping with the vast and deadly Indian insurrection, and with disturbed relations in China. Of our own troubles no man can see the end. If we are only to lose money and by painful poverty to be taught wisdom, no man need seriously despair. Yet the very haste to be rich, which is the occasion of this widespread calamity, has also tended to destroy the moral forces with which we are to resist and subdue the calamity." Evidently, we may conclude, the generations never learn, and each in his own generation has to be taught wisdom by painful experience, and trained in moral force. Life is still the adventure of the individual. The generations from 1857 to the present have given us unprecedented changes in the material and the social aspects of our living, and science has sought to reduce these things to the efficiency of machines, but the qualities of the spirit which are attained only with struggle will ever remain the real criterion of the success of life.

Charity in Our Times

THE THOROUGHLY contemporary and practical nature of Catholic charity must have struck everyone who followed the recent meeting of the National Conference of Catholic Charities at Wilkes-Barre, Pennsylvania, and the generous notice given by the press to the reports of the meeting cannot have failed to reach a wide audience both Catholic and non-Catholic throughout the United States. The basic and unalterable moral quality of charity was stressed by the Right Reverend John Gregory Murray, Bishop of Portland. William L. Igoe, of St. Louis, president of the National Conference of Catholic Charities, pleaded for an active participation by every Catholic in works of charity, stressing that if those who have little, give a little, and those who have much, give much, the present emergency will be solved in a truly Christian manner. A statement of diocesan directors of Catholic Charities called upon state and federal governments to provide a program of public works which will absorb an appreciable number of the unemployed. While this is a suggestion against which many economic authorities see serious objections, it is difficult to conceive what evil would result from it: there is nothing in the country which approaches a famine condition or the breakdown of the means of production; rather there has been a crisis of underconsumption.

INDIVIDUALS in a falling market are relatively powerless against this, but corporate community enterprise which would employ labor, widen retail purchasing power, mitigate the bad effect on general morale of widespread pauperism, and provide an outlet for some of the basic industries, such as steel, which are now operating at 30 percent of their capacity to produce, conceivably might turn the tide. It is not intended as a new economic dispensation, but as an emergency measure. Individualism, we believe, is inherent in the nature of the American people and would quickly reassert itself with the emergence of better times. Birth control as an economic, a physical and a moral evil was discussed by the Reverend John A. Ryan, director of the Department of Social Action of the National Catholic Welfare Conference, Dr. Charles P. Neill, and the Reverend Edward Roberts Moore, chairman of the Conference's Committee on Population Decline. A number of other notable speakers were heard, including, as an instance of the thoroughness of the conference, the Right Reverend Monsignor John J. Mellon of Philadelphia on "A Community Program for Crime Prevention through the Church."

The Denver Debates

THE REVISION of the marriage laws of the Protestant Episcopal Church, passed at Denver after heated debates, and discussed with more good-will than competence by the press, marks, as might be expected, and as was the case with the abortive attempt of the Church of England to revise its Prayer-book, a tendency to move in several directions at once. The principle of recognizing annulment as distinct from divorce, and the establishing of ecclesiastical courts for the dealing with such cases, are at least in appearance Catholic, though the "impediments" enumerated, in some cases, such as that of "insanity" as distinct from "mental deficiency of either party sufficient to prevent the exercise of intelligent choice," are capable of very lax interpretation. There is irony for a Catholic, accustomed to the bringing against his Church of the charge of resorting to subterfuges, in the spectacle of Episcopalians establishing a whole brood of diocesan "Rotas," and in finding the procedure described in a headline of the New York *Times* as "Episcopalians Vote for Liberal Divorce." Yet if the recognition of causes for decrees of nullity meant, as it should mean, greater clearness in matrimonial theology, and above all greater firmness in maintaining a bond judged to be valid, Catholics could only rejoice.

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Such, unfortunately, is not the case. Not only did the General Convention in Denver maintain the former permission to remarry, under certain conditions, for the innocent party in a divorce for adultery, with its extraordinary implication that one partner may be still bound by a tie which does not bind the other, but it has gone much farther than this. Section VII (2) of the new canon reads: "Any persons who have been married by civil authorities, or otherwise than as this church provides, may apply to the bishop or to the ecclesiastical court of their domicile for the recognition of communicant status or for the right to apply for holy baptism or confirmation. After due inquiry into all the facts relevant thereto judgment shall be given in writing to the petitioners by the bishop or by the ecclesiastical court acting through the bishop. In case of a favorable decision a minister of this church may, at his discretion, bless the parties to the union." This means that a bishop can admit to Episcopal sacraments, without pronouncing on the validity of their "marriage," persons who may be, by the canons of his own church, living in sin, and that a minister may "bless the parties to the union." Frank and complete acceptance of the civil power's competence to determine the matrimonial state of Christians would have been more consistent, and scarcely more radical in its possible results! One can only hope that the personal conservatism of most of the Episcopal clergy may serve in some measure to counteract the evil consequences of this surrender.

THERE are, of course, two grounds upon which the modern disintegration of marriage may be approached, the empirical and the doctrinal. The complete attitude embraces both, and we think it worth a word of commendation that the statement of the Long Island Conference of the United Lutheran Synod of New York (as given to the press by the news bureau of the National Lutheran Council) at least approximates this attitude. We do not mean to suggest that the fact is surprising. The Lutheran body has from the beginning been marked among the Protestant group by the retention of much of the old Catholic sacramental belief and conservatism, in this matter as in many others. What we do mean is that (as von Hügel pointed out in a striking passage) orthodox Christians are more united now than at any time since the Reformation; their foes are foes in common, and are more and more understood to be in common; and as Catholics, inheritors and striving to be worthy custodians, of the complete Christian tradition, we would recognize and welcome every manifestation of loyalty to right morals and the Creed, not in a surprised or a patronizing spirit, but in a spirit of fraternal encouragement.

Lutherans on Marriage

THE REPORT in question notes the present shocking divorce rate and the danger of badly functioning homes, since "moral excellence and social stability are more largely dependent on the home than on any other agency or institution"; it notes also that "forms of marriage are being advocated . . . which we believe are both psychologically unsound and socially destructive." It then goes on definitely to stigmatize these "forms" as being "in open opposition to the Christian ideal of the permanency and sanctity of marriage." "It is a travesty on religion," so run the words in another place, that the church should bless marriage without using all the means within its power to make marriage endure. From stating how significant and heartening we feel this to be, we think it fair to go on to say that the practical tactics recommended (we rely throughout this comment on a newspaper report)—the setting up of a bureau for family advice, the reading by ministers of modern treatises on sex and psychology, the establishment of marriage preparation class for young people—will probably accomplish less than is hoped for from them. Useful, even necessary as they are, they must be ancillary to the factors which are surely the logical corollaries of "the Christian ideal of the permanence and sanctity of marriage," if the implications of that ideal are followed out: sacramental grace, humbly and devoutly sought, and a real moral discipline, unflinchingly administered.

TWO RATHER interesting new developments in American architecture are of recent date. Perhaps it is hardly accurate to speak of them as new developments; they are more in the nature of steps along the way. One is the announcement that in the vast Radio City which is to have the unique advantage so much cried for by the advance guard of modern architects of being a unit which will span several whole city blocks, color is to be an integrated part of the plan. This is something about which much has been said and written in a theoretical vein. It is obviously a loss to the eye, and very possibly to the spirit, that our cities should all be in drab greys and browns. The vernal and seasonally changing colors of nature are practically banished from the city, and hitherto there has been no attempt at replacing them with art. True there is a patent danger in color, in its abuse. Were city blocks to become, besides the battle-ground of noises, a violent quarrel of colors, mad city dwellers would probably be even less exceptional than they are now. "But softly, softly," as someone has said, and the thing could be done. Tile is the likeliest medium. It is ideally suited to steel-framework construction, wherein the compression strength of the wall surfaces is relatively unimportant as each floor is keyed into the metal frame so that the lower walls do not carry the weight of all the walls above them. It is light; it can be had in practically any color or standard dimension, and its glazed surface is too slick to be buried under soot and dust. The other development is the announcement by the Beaux Arts Institute of Design of New York, of the establishment of an annual $1,500 award

American Architecture

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to the winner in a competition on illumination. It is hoped that this award will stimulate consideration of artificial lighting organic with the building, and not merely applied after a building's completion.

God of Our Fathers

READING the Old Testament has not merely become unpopular; it is a little under suspicion, even among very religious people. Contentions by a group of modern scholars to the effect that many portions of the Hebraic Scriptures merely parallel tribal beliefs current in the Eastern Mediterranean countries have undermined the sincerity with which people give assent to even the Mosaic books. To this very dangerous tendency something like a powerful antidote is administered in a series of articles by the Reverend John P. Arendzen, now appearing in the *Homiletic and Pastoral Review*. Since this periodical circulates almost exclusively among the clergy, we think it well to advertise the articles in question. They are based on the studies of Professor Dürr of the German University of Braunsberg, whose competence in this field is universally recognized. The first point made is that while many things of minor importance in the Old Testament do also appear in the records of peoples near whom the Semites dwelt, the major doctrines stand absolutely alone. Perhaps the most significant difference is that the universal ethical monotheism of the Jews is in sharp contrast with the polytheism of all other peoples in the area. Jehovah was likewise no mere national deity, but the "God of every tribe and nation," to whom belonged the future the prophets were constantly attempting to discern. Finally, the Old Testament has a structural unity without a counterpart in religious literature. These declarations will be examined in the light of all the evidence which scholarship has been able to throw on the problem.

In Praise of Collegians

THE PLEASANTEST news of the week was something that happened at the Chicago-Northwestern football game. It is almost enough to restore the tottering credit of college education. Possibly the forty thousand or so students who filled the Northwestern stadium are mere cultural goose-steppers aiming to graduate *Mirabile Dictu,* as the saying goes; possibly some of them wear coonskin coats and strum ukeleles, and others write crepuscular poetry and let their hair grow lank and long; possibly, too, many of them are guilty of that overemphasis on sports which deservedly forms so serious a count in the indictment of the American collegiate young. Nevertheless, they have proved that they have an unspoiled and spontaneous sense of decency. They do really seem to know that a notorious racketeer should not be countenanced by ordinary, decent people. In contradistinction to the lawyers who dedicate skill and reputation to helping gunmen and the hirers of gunmen evade the law, to the judges who (gladly, it often seems) grant them bail, to the biographers who lovingly recite their sagas, the movies which sell empurpled dramatic versions of their deeds of derring-do as certified immaculate entertainment, the newspapers which follow their movements with an attention and detail they would not accord the highest saint or saviour, above all, the great golden-hearted general public which makes all this possible by making it pay—in contradistinction to all these, this band of youngsters were at least enlightened enough to hiss and boo Al Capone and his bodyguard off the field. They were not interested, seemingly, in the presence of the great man in their midst, not curious, or honored, or titillated. They were disgusted, and showed it with joyous abandon, and complete effectiveness. Is this, perhaps, the shortest way with racketeers?

IN THE DOLDRUMS

MR. WALTER S. GIFFORD'S appeal to the nation in behalf of the unemployed is sensible and encouraging from several points of view. It is true enough that the total effect of lost working hours on American wage-earners baffles estimate, that every hour now gained is so much clover, and that a gain is possible if each single sovereign citizen puts his mind to it. Mr. Gifford likewise says very correctly that those now employed "constitute a most important part of the buying public and are a main source of work." If they repair their houses, hang up a new curtain or plant a rosebush, and in general put the dollar which is headed for the savings bank where somebody else can get it in exchange for services or goods, there will be rejoicing in Zion. Perhaps one ought to add that dividends now being salted away are especially bad offenders against the principle of coöperation in these dire times.

But who shall induce us to take thus magnanimous a view of affairs? The "International Encyclopaedia" informs us that the doldrums are regions in which progress is difficult. "Although there is but little horizontal motion of the air within the doldrums, yet there appears to be considerable vertical motion," we read. And so we are manifestly in something like the doldrums. The extent to which cash and credit are distributed has narrowed alarmingly. It is not necessary to enter into details. Ordinary figures governing every form of public financing tell their own sad tale—show that the bread of credit has been gleaned from the waters and locked and barred inside the larders. Even currency has been withdrawn from circulation at an alarming rate. If we try to find a chief common denominator for all these operations, which extend from banks and security markets to the village widow with a few hard-earned hundred dollars, we shall find it in the clear, old-fashioned expedient of "getting liquid." In the doldrums sailors call it "getting a breeze." To have on hand a sufficient amount of cash for emergencies is the purpose which unites beggar and broker. The opponents of usury are winning their point without

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argument. There are $2,000,000,000 in the United States today on which no interest is being earned. But to date this fact has obviously been of little advantage to would-be optimists.

Now Mr. Gifford appeals to the public conscience. The way out of the depression lies, he says, "in each person's power to some degree." This power must now be used ethically: "Each must consult his own conscience as to whether his course in the emergency is helpful or not." The results of such a diagnosis would apparently be: a universal resolve to spend some money, and a universal willingness to take a chance. We have, it is hardly necessary to add, the greatest regard for conscience. It has wrought more things than this world dreams of, and if it is to get a real opportunity we shall be there with our mite of applause. Nevertheless, there is another familiar quotation to the effect that conscience doth make cowards of us all; and this seems to have been overlooked by Mr. Gifford. The average working citizen of the United States—and here we speak with some authority—does look at the situation with a clear sense of his duties and responsibilities. He has seen many neighbors lose jobs, even very good ones; and realizing that in a world where every individual must fend for himself the care for his family and dependents rests on him, he sets out to put his house in order.

And why shouldn't he? Assembled in Denver, the bishops of the Episcopal Church passed a resolution saying: "Our traditional philosophy of rugged individualism must be modified to meet the needs of a co-operative age." This rather mild statement, in keeping with the Holy Father's encyclical and (to all appearances) with Mr. Gifford's exhortation, was strenuously objected to by Mr. Wickersham, who accused the sentence of incorporating the philosophy of Soviet Russia and of denying "the whole concept of American civilization." Unless we have read Mr. Hoover's speeches incorrectly, he has often told the American people precisely what Mr. Wickersham has told the bishops. The point need not be stressed. But obviously the working citizen, who has been informed and is still informed by the spokesman for the nation's wealth that ruggedly minding his own business is how an individual amounts to something in the United States, cannot suddenly be expected to take the pleas of Mr. Gifford with the seriousness they merit. He sees that this is not a coöperative age for Mr. Wickersham and his friends; but he is none the less exhorted to expend his modest savings as if he lived in a coöperative age! Have we so completely forgotten the Lincoln adage that you can't fool all the people all the time?

Let us look at the situation retrospectively. The philosophy of post-war prosperity was a philosophy of taking risks, in every shape, size and color. It is by no means merely a matter of loans to governments and industries of insufficient financial substance. Citizens were invited to share in the benefits of instalment buying, a device useful in itself but employed by salesmen to entice purchasers into imposing heavy risks on future income. Building programs, some of them utterly fantastic, were based on inflated realty values which could legitimately appeal only to investors willing to play speculative backgammon. The point is that risk became the principle upon which the average person's conception of a monetary future was founded. Literally trusting everything and everybody, he exuded a confidence as rare as it was touching. There was no imaginary limit to the complimentary epithets he bestowed on "great men" who had, even from government platforms, assured him that his wad would get bigger and better all the time.

This average person—whom we here represent pretty effectively—has gone through a rude trouncing. Many of his investments are worth $.10 on the dollar. His income has been cut, his taxes are higher, his banks are failing, his credit is zero, his radio is harder to pay for than ever. He sees several kinds of handwriting on every wall he happens to pass. And of course he is doing the kind of thing to which Mr. Gifford legitimately objects. But he is doing it solely and simply because those to whom he has looked for leadership set him a clear-cut example. When Mr. Hoover went to Detroit, he argued not that the business of acceding to veteran demands would in the long run prove disastrous, but that the government couldn't afford to "assume a $2,000,000,000 burden." It is essential that the government be in a liquid position. When the great corporations reduce wages and cut dividends, the object is to put the business in a liquid position. When we are informed that no further steps are to be taken by the administration toward settling the fundamental and crucial problem of international indebtedness, the reason is: unwillingness to risk action in the face of disturbed political conditions. We submit that these are the facts which John Henry Jones is given to sleep over when his day's work is done, and the exceedingly problematical matter of whether there will be another day's work haunts his quiet dreams. Are they calculated to make him go on a rampage of spending and employing?

The conclusion is that whether or not our industrial system will be modified to permit of a more collective functioning, the conscience of the nation is collective. Initial steps toward recovery will not be taken by the individual citizens, but by the government, by the leadership of industry, by the churches. When the citizen sees these setting an example which he can follow, some discipleship will be forthcoming. But a man who hears that political conditions in Europe are too uncertain to allow any decisive action on a matter which more than any other troubles and disturbs the world's financial activity, is not a man who will think that business in the United States is good enough to enable him to buy a piano. The people of whom conscience is not to make cowards must be a people bravely led. In the doldrums a wind will do more than a paddle. Something similar happens in depressions.

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UNDERSTANDING FRANCE

By LOUIS P. HARL

Many Americans are finding it hard to understand France. Torn between admiration for a country against which the waves of depression pound with relative harmlessness, and exasperation with politicians who apparently would stop at nothing to gain their ends, the citizenry of the New World is at a loss to know what France is all about. The author of the following paper is a journalist, originally Kentuckian, who has lived and toiled in Paris for a dozen years. We feel that his sympathetic interpretation is to the point, and that the information which accompanies it is to the point.—The Editors.

PARIS, fine listening-post, has caught only the echoes of the general distress of this unhappy summer. In a decade of summers spent since the war in the French capital I recollect none more pleasant in some respects. It would seem that some bright jinnee had stayed or broken at the frontiers the storm-clouds of disaster and discontent, and distilled from the general depression, here exclusively atmospheric, only cloudiness and rain. Never have the soft skies of the Ile-de-France been softer, France's fruits more plentiful and luscious, her 200 varities of cheese more tasty, her unrivaled wines more eloquent of mellow fruitfulness and the maturing sun. The excessive rain, it is said, has somewhat damaged the corn, but granary floors creak as usual, and the *vendangeurs* of the Midi, the cider-presses of Normandy, the pear-gatherers of Picardy, will soon be having plenty to do. My garden is a riot of freshness and color. Prices remain rather high, but the farmer is selling his wheat for 150 francs a quintal, while the Kansas farmer is getting only $.25 a bushel, and Parisians still have work and some money in pocket. The bad weather has not kept Parisians from their vacations at the seaside, or in the mountains, without which summer would not be summer, but never at this season has the city seemed more crowded, rich and prosperous than this year. Paris, it is true, is not France, but to my knowledge no complaints have come from the provinces.

Now, under present circumstances, these are noteworthy facts, of more than local interest. There are many general reasons, and one particular reason, why Paris has been so interesting and prosperous—colorful, too—this summer. The particular reason is, of course, the exposition, which during the first four months has drawn over eighteen million visitors, and which when it ends in November will probably have drawn the record number of twenty-five million. Instead of the usual two million foreign visitors Paris anticipates welcoming this year three million. And such visitors! They include all the royalty, most of the leading figures of European officialdom, of course, with hordes from every country. But, despite the pomp and show which has attended some of the official visits, it is the visits of the potentates and natives of the outlying parts of the world which Paris has really enjoyed: the Sultan of Morocco, who came in a cruiser with 250 of his black guardsmen, clad in scarlet and with rings in their ears; the Sultan from Somaliland, who traveled third class with a servant, and was lost for three days in Marseilles before the reception committee found him; scores of Congolese chieftains, who arrived by air, umbrellas and all, and were as happy as pickaninnies, except when the camera men appeared, when their dignity shone like the Queen of Sheba's; the young Emperor of Annam, who studies in France, and may have seen his court ballet girls perform for the first time at the exposition; sultans from Java and Borneo, maharajahs and nabobs from India, wise men from the East, mighty hunters from the South Seas and Africa. Black men, red men, brown men, have joined the picturesque defile. Only Gandhi and his goats have been missing, and they are expected. Never has the Parisian flaneur, accustomed as he is to rubbing shoulders with the world in his streets and cafés, had such a treat.

Also the Parisian has had more general and substantial reasons for being content this summer. When he tired of watching his visitors from his café seat or had finished a tour of the world for a few francs at the exposition, he had only to pick up his newspaper to see how much better off is the man who is content with cheap and simple pleasures, and has the wherewithal to obtain them, than are many more ambitious folk throughout the world. Others would do well to draw a lesson from his good fortune, rather than envying it, as many do.

Dislike him though you may, the Frenchman almost never fails to command the respect of those who know him, and with better acquaintance this respect is likely to ripen into a sincere admiration. At the risk of being thrown out of court by many uninformed or misinformed Americans, I may add that rarely has the nation deserved respect more than in recent years. Totally unprepared by education and ancestry, chance threw me among this people under circumstances peculiarly favorable for knowing them. I felt at home from the first, and have lived among them as one of themselves. I owe them nothing. I may add that I am not aware of national or racial prejudices, likes or dislikes, and if I have been happy in France, I might have been equally happy in a dozen other places. My main object in giving testimony arises out of a certain sense of patriotism toward the country of my birth, and a certain sense of fairness. I feel it almost a duty to combat a prejudice, unjustified, deliberately manufactured in part, which has grown up against France recently in the United States.

There are the best of reasons why the friendship

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which developed between the two countries out of the war should continue. The true Frenchman feels a sincere gratitude toward the United States for having come to the aid of the Allies. For him at least the war was a perfectly clear issue, a matter of life and death. He did not reason why the United States should have come in. He may have remembered that his country once went to help America in a like need. His intelligence and clear-headedness enables him to see pretty clearly through the tangled skein of diplomacy, open or shut, and had he gone into the matter he would have had few delusions about it. But it did not concern him. He accepted the fact and was appreciative. It may be as important for the United States as for France that this appreciation be not discouraged. As an internationalist of a kind, who sees in a world becoming more nationalist a possibility of escape from the catastrophe of internationalism, I believe that we should try to retain this intangible, moral indebtedness. To have the indebtedness of a people as proud, strong and honest as the French means something. We need not love Germany less. One word more. The Frenchman is a realist in politics and in life, but like most realists, clear-sighted. He does not travel much, but few people understand foreigners better. He has never believed like some Europeans that "the sun rises in the west," and if he was puzzled for a moment by something like a mirage, he very sensibly decided to wait and see.

I cannot attempt in an article of this length to analyze or depict that very complex thing, the French nation, than which, a brilliant Frenchman recently said, there is none more open or mysterious. Even were I competent to do more, I could give here only a few hints on such a rich subject, and attempt to combat a few of the most common errors abroad.

Hardly any people can be defined less easily than the French. The Frenchman is generally given credit for intelligence, courage, thrift; his patience, moderation and doggedness are not so well known. His intelligence, contrary to the opinion of many, is clear, fine and supple, rather than profound, shrewd and crafty. No one is less hypocritical, few are franker. Logical almost to excess, he is yet capable of the most amazing recoils, so that he has often been unjustly accused of lightness and instability, his simplicity mistaken for frivolity. In art he is remarkable for clarity, for critical faculties and rigid appreciation of form rather than for great creative power, but in pure science and mathematics he has few equals. Still, in his struggle to escape he created the Gothic art in the middle ages, and in our own times has pointed the way toward the development of the subconscious in literature, and modernism in art.

Few people grasp ideas more quickly, or turn from them more readily. Insouciant and naturally undisciplined, it seems that only the fleeting thought really charms him, or long holds his interest, and yet, paradoxically, he, like all of us perhaps, finds thought unsatisfactory. He is the antithesis of the stolid plodder, yet industrious and constant in many things. Nowhere is individual liberty more cherished than in France. In few countries have family ties held more strongly and closely, while all the solid Christian virtues and Catholic traditions have been better preserved by large elements of the population than is generally realized abroad. At the present moment perhaps the Frenchman's most important quality—important for him and for the world—is his prudent conservatism. Paris, which has had the reputation of thinking today what France thinks tomorrow and Europe afterward, has become an anchor of conservatism amid the disintegration of the Occident. Let us pray that it holds.

France is more than a nation, just as Paris is more than a capital. Indeed, France might not inaccurately be described as about one-third nation, one-third concept or idea, one-third language. The subtle power of the language, if you consider it, is amazing. It is the nearest thing we have today to the purity and clearness of Greek, but, of course, infinitely more important. These qualities may explain in a measure its conquests and have contributed no little to the prestige of the people. It is amazing to consider the number of writers who have used French as a medium, but were not French at all. It is the diplomatic language of the world still—the most extensively spoken of any European language except English. The traveler in Spain, Portugal, Latin America, Italy, Holland, Scandinavia, the western Slav countries, finds almost as many, if not more, French books than in the native languages. Several nations can boast more great writers, none a more fecund or diversified literature.

France is a nation through an idea—the idea of unity, received from the Romans, but the growth of centuries. It is also geographically a nation. Linguistically it has finally become one, but ethnologically it is not a nation. Historians are only beginning to attach sufficient importance to geography. Take the case of France. At the western extremity of the Eurasian continent are three nations, all most remarkable, all having played a predominant part in modern history. One is an insular people, separated by water from the rest; another is a peninsular people, separated by mountains. Now, whether water and mountains still separate is questionable, but until a comparatively recent period they did so. This is one explanation of English and Spanish history. In the center of this western extremity is France, separated by no formidable barriers from the scores of races to the east, and serving as a hyphen between north and south. Blessed with a choice soil, most favored part of Europe through its diverse climates and beauties and the fact that here three seas approach each other, this happy region began attracting men countless centuries ago. Innumerable hordes from northeast and southeast, and some from north and southwest, pushed their way thither. And here, facing the unknown ocean, or seduced by the land's richness, they stopped. Nowhere has the instinct of self-preservation played such a part as on this

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soil; nowhere have so many races mingled and survived and made such a melting pot, comparable only to our own—produced under different circumstances. Basques, Celts, Greeks, Phoenicians, Romans, Huns, Moors, Norsemen, Germans, English, Spaniards, have here fought and mingled, and the blood, and even the language, of several of these survives in the France of today. The greatest influences were Celt, Roman, German.

The words "Finis Galliae" have been heard several times in the past, when men believed that the French had succumbed to moral decadence or superior force. Men said this in 1871, and repeated it during the second decade of the present century. But the decadence was only apparent, or not sufficient. The recoil of the instinct of self-preservation of this remarkably supple and intelligent people saved it, and they amazed the world by growing stronger than ever. Crushed militarily and financially (there were reparations then too) in 1871, mutilated by the loss of part of her cherished soil, France set to work, rebuilt, paid and then proceeded to build up an empire second to none. Again in 1914-1918, this time victorious on the battlefield with the aid of others, but bled white of her man-power, her richest provinces in ruin, crushed by debts, she set herself to the task. A new invasion, this time a peaceful one, of several million Spaniards, Italians, Belgians, Slavs—again the blending of north and south and east—has made good her man-power. Her devastated regions are richer and more prosperous than ever; she has slowly begun to wipe out her debts; she is again becoming the banker of half the world and attaining to a strength she has rarely had before.

In 1908 Prince von Buelow, whose very interesting and informative memoirs, just published in France, have created a furore, wrote:

> Very interesting all that Ballin tells me about the economic depression which reigns everywhere. Money at this moment is as rare in England as in America, or in Germany. One finds it only in France, because the development of industry there has not been forced too much, and the population there is thrifty.

These words might have been written in 1931. The situation today is somewhat similar, only far more tragic. But von Buelow is speaking of only one phase of French greatness, and under present circumstances not the most important phase. France's greatest asset is her moral strength, of which the world knows so little, but of which the foregoing, I hope, has given some hint. There is something rather artificial about the whole business of prosperity—trade, gold, riches—although I believe that France's wealth is built on a less artificial basis than that of many other countries. However, this is the aspect of France's position that is just now attracting most attention. The world looks upon her recovery since the war as a miracle. In reality it is none. It may be explained in three words—work, intelligence, economy. The Frenchman is balanced in everything, there is no madness in his work, but he is very industrious. None of the Occidental peoples are more thrifty and few are more intelligent and prudent in the employment of wealth. The story of France's after-war recovery is well known. What is her actual position today?

Half of the people of France live on the soil, and this half of the people have remained prosperous when farmers everywhere else were in distress. This is due principally to the facts that the peasant has been protected, and that France is not dependent to any great extent upon foreign markets to rid her of huge surpluses of foodstuffs. Take wheat. The price is kept high in France to protect the wheat grower, considered an indispensable factor in national economy. The price of bread is fixed, the price of wheat is regulated, and millers are not allowed to import more than 10 or 15 percent of their required wheat. I will not go into the complicated question of French tariffs, but suffice it to say that they seem to be serving a very useful purpose. The fact that France is self-sustaining, has not over-expanded most of her industries, has great markets and sources of raw materials in her colonies, and has kept agriculture and industry well balanced, has given her a particularly advantageous position.

It is by no means entirely a question of tariffs. A few other countries, like Holland, which has free trade, seem to be succeeding almost as well. There has been a decided slowing up of trade in France within the last year or so, but it has caused little real suffering so far. There is some unemployment, but only about 50,000 asking unemployment aid. Many French industries are in small towns and their workers in considerable proportion were peasants until a few years ago. It is said that thousands of these have simply returned to the soil, which sorely lacked hands. Others are making out by gardening and drawing upon their savings for their simple wants—French suppleness and thrift and moderation again.

Intelligent control has done much to place France in an exceptionally strong financial position again. Depreciation of the franc wiped out four-fifths of its value, causing hardship to many, reducing the fortunes of others, but making the national debt supportable. It may now be reckoned at between ten and fifteen milliards of dollars, practically all internal. It is estimated that the country also has lost something like one hundred milliards of gold francs through the failure of foreign creditors to pay during the last twenty years. Her visible trade balance has been adverse most of the time for many years, her national budget often in deficit, yet, despite all this, because of her wealth and thrift few nations are in a more favorable financial position. Her debt is being reduced, and she has amply proved recently what a useful and intelligent banker she is.

France and the United States have the financial fate of the world in their hands at present, and much depends upon their courage and intelligence.

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THE PENSION

By HELENE MULLINS

WHEN the New York State government announced that it would grant a small pension to its destitute citizens over the age of seventy who were reluctant to go into charitable institutions, Mrs. Stevens asked her landlady for a sheet of paper and an envelope, and in a loose, almost illegible scrawl, made out her application.

Two weeks later, an investigator called. This investigator, a large, cheerful woman of thirty-two or three, exuded an air of health and optimism which, in the squalid atmosphere of the dingy tenement, seemed almost like an affront. Unfortunately, she did not find Mrs. Stevens at home, and was told she would have to come again. In the meantime, the landlady, an osseous individual of about sixty, with bead-like, inquisitive eyes, was only too willing to tell what she knew of her lodger.

"She was sent to me five years ago by our rector. She is eighty years old, with no children, except a son somewhere, whom she hasn't seen for forty years. The rector gives her $2.00 a week and she pays that to me for her room. Her meals she picks up here and there. I give her a cup of coffee in the morning, and she gets lunch and supper from two or three families in the neighborhood who have known her for years. Of course, I can't afford to—"

"Can you give me the names and addresses of these families?" interrupted the investigator.

"I can give you one of them. I don't know the others."

The investigator made a few notes on her memorandum pad, before speaking again. "And she hasn't any money at all, except this $2.00 a week from the rectory?"

The landlady hesitated. "Well, I don't like to say."

"I have to know," said the investigator firmly.

"Well, then, I can't tell you for certain, but when she came here she did have $100 in the bank, but she may have spent it."

"Probably she did—in five years," commented the investigator. "Well, I'm much obliged to you, madam. May I have your name?"

The landlady told her; it was Mrs. Flemming.

When Mrs. Stevens returned and discovered that she had missed her visitor, she was very much perturbed, and looking suspiciously at her landlady, asked in a wheezy voice, "What did you say about me?"

"Why, nothing much," answered Mrs. Flemming cautiously. "Just said you'd been with me five years."

"You oughtn't to have said that."

"Why not?" demanded the landlady in surprise.

"You have no right to mix yourself in my affairs. I'll tell them what I want them to know," said Mrs. Stevens, and mumbling under her breath, groped her way slowly down the dark hall to her room.

On the following day, for fear of again missing her visitor, she did not venture out of the house. About one o'clock, the investigator arrived, and was conducted to the room at the end of the hall. Upon beholding this dark room, no bigger than a closet, and without even one window, the healthy young woman could not repress a shudder; it seemed to her incredible that in the great prosperous city of New York there could actually be found human beings who existed in such misery. Then her gaze fell upon the aged woman who was eying her anxiously, not openly and directly, but with the furtive prudence of those who have found the world an unremitting enemy. So tiny and fragile did she appear that the investigator had a queer sensation that at any moment she might fall to the floor and break into small pieces. Her eyes were the color of lead; her mouth was twisted into a peculiar grimace, as though she wished to smile, but had forgotten how.

The room had an offensive odor, which neither of the old women seemed to notice, but which made the investigator feel ill, and searching for a pretext to leave it, she said, "I must have a table to write on."

"A table?" repeated Mrs. Stevens helplessly. "You can see there's no room here for a table."

The investigator turned abruptly to the landlady. "Couldn't we use your dining-room?"

"Why, yes, I was just going to offer it to you," answered Mrs. Flemming, and led the young woman down the hall.

Muttering something about lack of privacy, Mrs. Stevens followed them.

"I guess you'd rather be left alone," said Mrs. Flemming. "I'll just go out to the kitchen and finish my work." But she left open the door connecting the two rooms, and moved noiselessly about in her kitchen, so that she could overhear the conversation.

Mrs. Stevens showed by her uneasiness that she was aware of this eavesdropping, and her replies to the questions were vague and circumspect. "I don't want her to know all my business," she whispered, finally.

"Why, but doesn't she know most of it already?" inquired the investigator, somewhat astonished at this display of pride in the old woman. However, to humor her, she rose and closed the door.

Only then would Mrs. Stevens consent to talk. Her life story did not require very long to tell. She was eighty years of age, and had been a widow for ten years. Her husband had been a janitor, and they had always got along well, without asking help of anybody, until one winter he became crippled with rheumatism. From that time, misfortune piled upon them. Their son ran away from home, and their little girl was run over in the street by an automobile. To support herself and her crippled husband, Mrs. Stevens went

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out as charwoman by the day, and this work she continued for some years after the old man's death. Then her strength failed, and she was obliged to seek a little assistance from friends.

"And if you get this pension, what changes will you make in your way of living?" inquired the investigator in a professional tone.

At this question, the old woman's face became strangely animated, and her thin, wheezy voice took on a kind of false sturdiness as she answered; "I won't accept any more charity, and I'll move away from here, too; get myself a decent room, with a little stove in it, where I can get my own meals."

The investigator wrote all this down, and without betraying any emotion, pursued her questionnaire. "Mrs. Flemming gave me the name and address of your friend, Mrs. Cox. Who are your other friends?"

"I haven't any others."

"But she said you had three or four friends, to whom you went for your meals. And Mrs. Cox said so, too."

The old woman's voice dropped to a whisper. "I told them I had all those friends because I didn't want them to think I had to depend on them."

Forgetting her resolution to be tactful, the investigator blurted out. "But where do you get your meals when you don't go to Mrs. Cox for them?"

"I don't get any," answered the old woman simply. "I'd rather do without than be under so many obligations." And in an undertone, as though talking to herself, she went on: "I've been living this way for five years, and I can't bear it any longer; I'd rather go to the poorhouse. And if I don't get a pension, that's what I'll do."

Before this vehement display of independence by the feeble old woman, the investigator was speechless. At last, collecting herself, she put a final question. "What about your bank account? Have you still got it, or have you spent it?"

Mrs. Stevens looked at her in alarm. "What bank account?"

"Didn't you have $100 in the bank?"

"Who told you that?"

"Why, Mrs. Flemming."

"It's a lie," protested the old woman. "I haven't got a penny, except the $2.00 I get every week from the rectory."

The investigator put down her fountain pen and leaned across the table. "Mrs. Stevens, I want to give you a little friendly advice. It doesn't matter in the least if you have $100 in the bank; you'll still be eligible for a pension. But if it's discovered that you have lied in any way about your circumstances, your case may be dismissed as unworthy."

Dropping her head, Mrs. Stevens began to cry, wiping her eyes on the sleeve of her coarse brown dress. "Why do you want to torment me?" she sobbed. "I haven't any money. It's true I did have $100, but it's been gone long ago. Do you suppose I'd be living like this on charity, if I had any money?"

"Why, that's all right then; that's all I wanted to know," replied the investigator soothingly. "What bank was it you had the money in?"

Once more the old woman gave a suspicious glance out of her lead-colored eyes. "What bank? How can I remember that?"

"Was it the Bowery Savings, or the Emigrant?"

"Yes," she assented eagerly. "The Bowery; I guess that was it."

The investigator slipped her papers into her portfolio and rose from the table. "That's all, Mrs. Stevens. I'll put in your application right away. You're sure you've kept nothing back from me now?" she asked in an urgent tone, unable to rid herself of a lingering doubt concerning the old woman's veracity. "I want to see you get this pension, and as I told you, they'll simply tear up your papers, and all my work will go for nothing, if anything to your discredit is found."

"I've told you all there is to tell," replied Mrs. Stevens doggedly, averting her eyes.

As soon as she heard the outside door close, Mrs. Flemming came out of her kitchen and smiled ingratiatingly, as though wishing to apologize for having, with her ear to the key-hole, at last satisfied her curiosity with regard to the life history of her lodger, and asked if they couldn't have a pot of tea together.

But Mrs. Stevens refused curtly, and in a great hurry went to her room. From a pocket formed by a tear in the wall-paper at the foot of her bed, she drew forth a dusty bank-book, put on a faded red shawl, and left the house. She did not believe what the investigator had said about it making no difference to the government whether or not she had a few dollars in the bank; if it made no difference, why did they insist upon knowing about it?

At the Bowery Savings Bank, she drew out her $100, and surrendered her book. Then, tucking the money carefully into her stocking, she started homeward. But as she walked, it became clear to her that it would not do to hide the money in her room, where daily it would risk discovery; the best thing would be to entrust it to some friend who would not betray her. And with this idea in mind, she stopped at a tenement on Twenty-seventh Street, and rang one of the bells in the dark vestibule.

"Ah, there you are; so you've come at last!" greeted Mrs. Cox. "Where have you been for two days, eh? Supper's not ready yet; can I give you some tea and bread and jam?"

But Mrs. Stevens was not hungry. "I've come to ask you a favor," she said hurriedly. "I want you to keep this for me, and not tell a soul anything about it." And, thrusting her hand into her stocking, she produced a roll of bills.

"Heavens! what's this?" cried Mrs. Cox in alarm, her whole corpulent body beginning to tremble, her brown eyes ready to pop out of her head.

Mrs. Stevens explained.

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"But you poor old fool!" cried her friend. "Don't you suppose they'll investigate at the bank, and learn that you've just drawn out your $100 in order to hide it?" demanded Mrs. Cox.

"I don't care if they do," answered Mrs. Stevens indignantly. "It's my money; I earned it honestly, and it's nobody's business what I do with it."

Nothing could convince her that she had committed a rash act, in direct opposition to her own interests. "You keep it," she insisted. "No matter what happens, I'll be sure of a decent burial anyway."

Mrs. Cox was obliged to accept the money, murmuring dolefully, "Well, I only hope you haven't done yourself too much harm."

These remarks caused Mrs. Stevens a profound uneasiness, but she would not admit it. Accepting her friend's offer of bread and jam, so that she would not have to wait for supper, she ate hastily and in silence, after which she returned home, to spend the remainder of the day brooding in her room.

At the end of the following week, the investigator put in an unexpected appearance.

"This call is entirely unofficial," she said to the old woman, ignoring her signals to wait until the landlady had left the room. "But I couldn't resist coming in to tell you that I'm awfully sorry your case has been dismissed. Why did you lie to me about the $100? I warned you, you remember."

"I haven't any money," began Mrs. Stevens, casting a wrathful glance at the landlady who was taking her time about moving off to her kitchen. But the investigator shrugged her shoulders.

"It's no good talking any more about it. When you do one dishonest thing, you naturally arouse suspicion as regards your whole character and the worthiness of your case. I can't say how disappointed I am in you, Mrs. Stevens. Of course, I know you really need the pension, but my personal opinion goes for nothing; it's the facts on my reports that are considered."

"So it was you who went inquiring at the bank!" exclaimed Mrs. Stevens reproachfully.

"I had to go. I have to do many things I don't like to do because they are part of my job."

"You needn't say any more," retorted Mrs. Stevens, and burying her face in her hands, she sobbed bitterly.

Unable to bear this sight, the investigator hurried away.

Later that same day, Mrs. Cox was surprised to have burst in upon her, Mrs. Stevens, dressed in an odd assortment of rags, and with eyes that were quite red from crying.

"I've come to say good-bye," she said in a quavering voice. "And I want to tell you that you can keep the money for yourself. I don't want it."

"Oh, why, I can't do that!" protested Mrs. Cox. "Just wait here and I'll get it for you."

"No, I want you to have it; then I can go away feeling that I've paid up everything; that I have no debts. Besides, I won't need it; I'm going to the poorhouse."

"The poorhouse!" gasped Mrs. Cox. "Surely that isn't necessary."

"Yes, it is," replied the old woman, and she related the story of the investigator's visit.

"But you haven't received any written communication from the government, my dear Mrs. Stevens. I'd wait for that, if I were you."

"No, I don't want to get it; I want to avoid it; it would make me feel too bad. Well, good-bye, Mrs. Cox," she said again, and started toward the door.

"Your money is here for you, when you want it," called her friend after her.

But at these words, Mrs. Stevens turned and cried out in a voice of despair: "Must that money be a plague to me for the rest of my life? It's brought me nothing but bad luck. Nobody will do anything for me while I've got it, and I want to find a warm corner somewhere, where I needn't worry about the future. When you've got money, there's a lot of red tape before people will help you, but when you've got nothing at all, they see you've got to have immediate help. Please, please Mrs. Cox, keep the money; you can find some use for it, and for me, it's nothing but trouble. I used to think I wanted to be sure of a decent burial after I died, and that was the main reason I hung on to it so long; but somehow, that doesn't seem to concern me so much now. I'd rather be able to sit in some corner where I can just doze, or do a little sewing, and not have to dress up and go out for my meals."

"But if you take this $100 and give it in to the poorhouse you're going to, you'll be treated a little better than if you gave nothing," her friend urged her.

At this suggestion, the old woman cried out in terror: "No, no; they'd never believe I didn't have more hidden away somewhere, and they'd give me no peace."

"Well, if you feel that way about it, I suppose I'll have to take it, but I want you to know—" began Mrs. Cox hesitatingly; but before she could finish, the old woman laid a trembling hand on her arm.

"God bless you! You're a good woman!" she exclaimed, and then she turned, and with amazing swiftness, disappeared through the door.

Afternoon Tea in a Bookshop

They sip their gossip as they sip their tea;
Each talks about her neighbor—or herself—
Their voices tinkle with the cups and spoons,
And all the while, unnoticed on the shelf,

Dante and Newman and Euripides,
Virgil and Petrarch and the young John Keats,
Shakespeare and Browning a mighty silence share
With Rostand and with Padraic Pearse and Yeats.

The lion enters: Will he sign his name
In half a score of books no one has read?—
Oh, let me come in silence to the shrine,
And spend an hour communing with the dead.

MARIE ANTOINETTE DE ROULET.

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SILESIA PRAYS

By HENRY MORTON ROBINSON

FAITH—clear, deep and unquestioning—is not eminently a modern virtue. In that constant substitution of new cells for old (metabolism proceeds in religion as surely as in biology) we have somehow displaced faith by ethics, laying the emphasis on the moral rather than on the spiritual strophe of our religious rhythm. In a complicated and intellectually suspicious society this seems inevitable, though as most of us would agree, not wholly to be desired. How refreshing it was, therefore, to observe during a brief sojourn in Upper Silesia one of those purer states of being, in which simple faith is still the distinguishing mark and chief happiness of the Catholic worshiper.

The religious faith of Upper Silesia is, I truly believe, the last thing of its kind in the world. It is so striking, so deep-sunk and yet so unostentatious, that I rank it among my solidest impressions of the German people. The land has been for ages a storm center of military aggression and civil abuse; if it be true that external pressure develops an intense inner strength, Silesia can attribute its religious energy to this cause.

Harassed by taxes, plagued by privations that pinch heart and body to the point of extinction, grateful if the steel mills and mines can provide a skeleton week's labor, the Germans of Upper Silesia are an amazing contemporary proof that Catholicism can be, and is, a bulwark of resistance and a fountainhead of courage when the breaks go against an entire people. From the rising of the sun to the going down of the same, the day of the Upper Silesian Catholic is constant testimony that man lives not by bread and labor alone (indeed, he could not well do so, for both are at a premium in Oberschlesien just now) but by the special grace and power of the Word.

I was strangely depressed by the Upper Silesian terrain. It has the sunken-cheeked hopelessness of true coal-mining country, the physical anaemia of a land whose bowels are being slowly sapped away. The flat horizon is a ring of tall-chimneyed *Fabriken,* owned chiefly by the realty Borsig syndicate with headquarters in Berlin. For five months of the year the land lies blanketed with snow, thick, determined snow that drifts down through Poland from dark Red Russia, not so many miles away. The spring is a long season of mud and rain (such mud, such rain!) and summer is a brief, sweltering period of topsoil fertility. The surface of the land is sinking steadily; the crust of the earth stretches like a tired grey skin over ill-concealed bones of anthracite. Only systematic propping and heroic feats of engineering keep that skin from splitting and crumbling into a wreck of pulverized coal dust.

Such are the physical aspects of the country. Politically, the case is even worse. Upper Silesia has the political misfortune to border on Poland, and now seems destined to suffer from the partitioning that is the chief feature of Polish history. Ten years ago a large section of Upper Silesia was handed over to Poland as the result of a sorely contested plebiscite in which more than 70 percent of the balloters voted to remain what they had been all their lives—Germans. The result of this partition, grimly engineered by Clemenceau to deprive Germany of some of her richest coal deposits, still rankles in Silesian hearts. Of world expediency and Polish deserts I will say nothing; I merely wish to point out that incessant guerrilla warfare along the border is a constant menace to the peace of Middle Europe, and that last spring on the tenth anniversary of the plebiscite, 40,000 Silesians faced the Polish borders and with upraised hands vowed never to relinquish their claim upon the home soil that had been wrested from them.

In this setting of strife and hardships the only unifying factor is the Church. Sturdily, effectively, the Church functions in Upper Silesia with apostolic vigor and sincerity, bidding a troubled people to place their onerous burdens in God's wisely omnipotent hands. Hungry and jobless, threatened on either side by *Arbeitslosikeit* and *Radikalismus,* the Catholics of Upper Silesia are finding genuine solace and sustaining strength in the unfailing security of their Church.

Their lives revolve around the Gothic edifice that is the physical church. From dawn till vespers they are acutely conscious of the great building that stands in the center of their village, speaking to them at frequent intervals through the mediacy of its bell towers. The day begins with a shattering peal of bells (the chimes, I am told, are not as rich or as full-toned as the old bells, commandeered by the Hohenzollerns for munitions of war), a clanging fusillade that rouses the unsuspecting sleeper with the startled conviction that the whole town is on fire. But it is only the morning Angelus, rung at five o'clock today, yesterday and three centuries ago, wakening the population with a deep-throated reveille that echoes across the flat fields to the remotest cluster of huts. At the clangorous peal, farmers, miners, hewers of wood and luggers of water, letter-carriers and policemen, the old, the halt and the blind—all arise and prepare to attend Mass. Daily Mass is generally celebrated at six o'clock. There is music, always music, both organ and choral, and the church is invariably crowded, not only with women and children but with men who wish to start their working day by assisting at Mass.

Sermons and announcements are made both in German and Polish; all Silesian priests are bilingual and can readily preach or hear confessions in either tongue. I was unable to understand the sermons in Polish, but the German homilies came over to me as excellent

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specimens of good old-fashioned doctrine, couched in strong, simple terms for an exceedingly unsophisticated congregation. Here was no literary shadow-boxing, no tenuous metaphysics such as delight urbaner folk. No indeed. Solid homiletics turning on a single Beatitude; hortatory injunctions against the seven proud sins; simple parables explained in still simpler terms—these were the substance of the dozen or more sermons I heard from various Oberschlesien pulpits. Being an honored guest of the pastor in one town, I was permitted to sit inside the sanctuary, and thus had an excellent opportunity to study the faces of the congregation as it listened to his exhortations. They were not pretty faces, they were not intelligent faces; they were the seamed faces of women who had borne many children, the patient faces of men who had spent their little heritage of sunlight in the mines. But seamed and shriveled as the faces were, they possessed a beauty of their own—the beauty of unquestioning faith and implicit confidence in God's Word and Will.

Bells, bells and still more bells—all through the morning and afternoon they bend the thoughts of the Silesian Catholic away from his mundane tribulations to the peace that either cometh from on high or does not come at all. If there is a funeral in the morning, the bells toll for half an hour (in some villages an hour)—a long melancholy duet between St. Michael and St. Gabriel, or whatever the bells happen to be named. "Hear St. Michael chime today," the villagers say to each other, "his voice seems deeper since the snow fell." The funeral itself is a communal affair; everyone attends it. The coffin is borne to the church upon the shoulders of friends, a funeral Mass is read, and from the Church the coffin is carried to the cemetery which usually adjoins, or is a part of, the churchyard. There is no hearse and no carriages. In the foot procession that leads to the grave, and in the ceremony preceding interment, the priest and the organist play major rôles.

Noon always brought a shower of bells and many visitors to the church. Bands of children, usually escorted by nuns, were entering and leaving the church all during noon hour. A christening procession might wind its way along the churchyard paths, the midwife waddling along with the baby in her arms (she does not receive her fee until the child is baptized) followed by the parents, the godparents and many friends. The *Taufschein* or baptismal certificate is as good as a civil birth certificate as legal proof of parentage, date of birth, etc. Many of these *Taufscheins* are gorgeous documents, embellished in gold and scarlet, and may be seen hanging proudly beside the owner's First Communion picture (real heirlooms these) on the wall of the best room in the house.

As I have already indicated, the church organist is a great man in the community, occupying in the eyes of the music-loving congregation, a position second only to the pastor himself. And after watching an organist put in a long Sunday of music, I am quite ready to admit that he earns both his prestige and his hire. During three Masses, a wedding, a funeral, and Benediction, he sat at his pipe-organ, playing constantly it seemed, from six o'clock in the morning to nine in the evening. When he had nothing else to do he drilled the choir, and a very good choir it was too. He had only one copy of a Palestrina score, so he spent his spare time making copies of it for his choir, or transcribing a movement from an oratorio that the pastor could not afford to buy. And for these labors, performed with more skill and joyousness than I have ever seen in America for twenty times the price, he received $60.00 a month! When I told this excellent musician that the organist of a certain church in New York receives $7,500 a year, he exclaimed: "What! Does he provide his own organ?"

The pastors of Upper Silesia are the stout guardians of a harried flock—old-fashioned guardians who combine in their persons the duties of guide, watchman and elder. I can think of no official position in our society that carries the burden of responsibility, or is accorded the profound yet dignified obedience, of the Silesian pastor's. They are true vicars, militant, spiritual instruments combating the serried opposition of hard times, as well as those traditional opponents—the world, the flesh and the devil. If they are losing some of their power over the younger generation, it is because they uncompromisingly attack that generation's pleasures—condemning the movies, the dance-halls and the inevitable tide of license that rises with the economic storm. The young men and women grumble a bit under their breath and surreptitiously seek the forbidden pleasure; but there is no open revolt, no disposition to challenge the doctrine or the ministers of the Church. There is very little agnosticism and no anti-clericalism in Upper Silesia. Only the usual smoldering irks of youth, nothing more.

I was in Silesia during two months of the hardest winter, climatically and economically, that the region has experienced since the war. During these two months of suffering I heard loud murmurs against the government and saw many manifestations of deep-set economic unrest. But never once, either in word, act or, as far as I can determine, even in thought, did the mature citizens of Upper Silesia display the slightest disloyalty to the Church.

There are many suggested panaceas for the rehabilitation of Germany, but the utterance of Chancellor Bruening in an address to the people of Silesia carries the soundest sentiment a German statesman ever uttered: "If Germany is to ride the fierce tempest of political and economic discontent that lashes it at present, it will be largely by reason of the stout spirituality and deep religious instincts of the German people."

The Catholics of Upper Silesia, to whom the chancellor was speaking, are the very archetypes of this spirituality. They have built their lives upon the solid rock of faith, and the gates of political or economic hell are not likely to prevail against them.

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A NOBLE ROMAN

By GOUVERNEUR PAULDING

ON SUNDAY, February 8, 1931, Pope Pius XI ordered a decree read which proclaimed that the life of a certain Contardo Ferrini, born 1859, died 1902, showed virtues on a heroic scale: these virtues being the theological ones of faith, hope and charity and the cardinal ones of prudence, justice, fortitude and temperance. Immediately though parenthetically it occurs to one that every single virtue in the list is despised by modern ideology save that of justice, admitted in name if not in fact, and far less popular even as a catchword than it was in the nineteenth century. As for the virtue of temperance, it has been derisively distorted, debased and radically changed in nature, so that one cannot even print the word without portesting that it means measure, and proportion (see Latin dictionary), and not teetotal. Yet even now men who have lived these unpopular virtues to an extraordinary degree and who are brought forward after their death by memory and piety for official investigation, are proclaimed by the Church as worthy of veneration. This of course is the first step toward eventual canonization.

Another contemplative one said, another monk one thought, glancing at the decree in the Monday papers; yet one was struck by the dates . . . a contemporary, born a year after Roosevelt and dead when Roosevelt had been but for twelve months President. Then reading on with some interest, one was surprised to find that Contardo Ferrini had been all his life a professor in the Italian state universities. One knew enough to know that in those days the state and its universities were philosophically anti-Catholic and practically and violently anti-clerical. It was possible and probable that among the professors were some practising Catholics; it seemed less likely that the fact that they practised their religion would be known to many others than themselves; it seemed incredible that the environment, poisonous, not martyr-making, would permit the public leading of a life so soon to be recognized as venerable. After all, in France it was the epoch when to go openly to Mass meant to endanger one's career in civil, military or university service, and in Italy there were much the same forces in control of things and much the same spirit. In Italy the historical cause for anti-clericalism was simple and can be summarized.

When ruin came to the Roman Empire with that regularity of doom which empires, political or economic, should not too easily forget, the sequence of Popes in Rome, among works of more importance, saved much of the territory which is now Italy from permanent foreign colonization. There was every reason for the northern conquerors to take over the political control of the Italian peninsula and even to settle there as a dominant class. There was only one reason, but that was sufficient, why they did not and could not do so: the presence of the Popes in Rome with their spiritual prestige and their territorial possessions, these latter being based on the survival of Roman law and merely confirmed and not created by later imperial donations. As a result was permitted the experimentation of mediaeval and Renaissance Italy. Yet when the new nationalism of the nineteenth century spread from Paris over the world, the obstacle in the path of the Italian *risorgimento* was found to be twofold: foreign occupation in the north, but in the very heart of the country, in Rome; and, by the mere fact of his presence, the Pope. If Italy were to be a nation in the new modern sense of the word, it must have its natural capital; and the Pope was there already. It was in fact largely because he was there, that the name Rome still sounded so loudly. It was because he was there, that the new kingdom had to be there. To the wild excitement of the times and, later, to the tradition of that excitement the problem seemed solvable only by force, and force left rancor. It was not till the realism and personal authority of the present government was attained in a manner strong enough to dismiss that tradition as irrelevant, that a solution could be reached. But in the interval the saint in the university was an anomaly.

Too often and insufficiently is the saint described as someone without hate, without sin, without lust, without this and without that, until the list of absences exasperates any man, and sanctity becomes pale and unreal. It is worth while considering Contardo Ferrini with precisely the opposite method. A saint is not a man diminished: he is a man to whom something called the love of God has been added. In the present case, here is a man with education, with scientific achievement, with devoted friends, with extraordinary mental courage, with humor . . . with an incessant and personal love of God. This last quality informs the rest.

He studies in Berlin, in those days the indisputable center for historical work. He is a specialist in the most obscure problems of Byzantine and Roman law. He returns to take up his teaching in the Italian universities. The great Mommsen travels to Pavia to see him and is amazed to find that people in Italy wonder why. Zachary von Lingenthal, German and Lutheran, in his will leaves his manuscripts and unfinished studies to Ferrini, a fervent Italian patriot and a Catholic.

In twenty years the number of his publications reaches the amazing total of 200. But from the start he has been ingenious to protect his humility: he has chosen a subject so remote from practical applications that the most complete success in exploring it

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will never make him known to more than two dozen specialists. And he can write in a preface, "I have always sought what I thought was true and never what I knew was startling"—a merit unusual even in his day and almost non-existent now.

Contardo Ferrini taught for nineteen years at the universities of Pavia, Messina, Modena and again Pavia, each move being a professional promotion and involving greater responsibility which he never shirked. It should perhaps be explained that in the Italian system of state universities the professors are shifted from post to post like any other civil servants. Outside of the lecture halls he gave his time unsparingly to his students and to his duties as a citizen. He served for a period as a member of the municipal council of the city of Milan, an unsual spectacle when we look back upon it now. He carried on a voluminous correspondence with friends who turned to him for advice or consolation in their troubles, for explanation in their religious difficulties, and these letters, some of which have been published, are a monument to his charity. It is no harm to add incidentally that they are written in a supple, clear and unpretentious prose. They do not preach: he preached only by example.

Whenever a short holiday gave him the time he would go with friends to the high mountains, the Swiss or the Italian Alps, to those lofty solitudes that so often have attracted saints. The solitudes of the mountains, of the desert, of the sea—we have so many saints for the first two, but we have in a way Our Lady for the sea, Stella Maris. It is a holiday for Contardo Ferrini and he can be held up in a village all day by a storm and he will spend hours in delighted prayer in the church, but he will also write verses in praise of the lunch provided him by its pastor. He sings with his friends. One day they force him to dance—with his sister. Then down to the cities and back to work.

He died very suddenly of typhoid fever.

Now in all fairness, is this not enough for a life? A man studies, seeks to enlarge the sum of human knowledge, teaches the young men who are to carry on the work, is charitable with the money he earns and with his heart. I have been more than brief, but is it not enough to show that this man lived not uselessly, indeed that activity crowded to a marked degree the short years of his life? Is this admitted? Then the point is plain. Purposely there has been no demonstration of his sanctity because it had to be shown that sanctity was something in his life that governed it, enveloped it, determined it . . . did not diminish it, render it negative. It was something more than his life that his life showed. And of it one dares not speak. A priest who knew Contardo Ferrini well said one day: "When we priests speak of Contardo we should put on our vestments."

There are some saints that anyone may write about with impunity. Any schoolboy may and must write about Shakespeare: no harm can come of it and perhaps twenty years after he may read one or two of the plays and enjoy them. There are the classical saints, Peter and Paul, and no amount of injudicious commentary can harm them. There are saints as dangerous to touch as a high explosive, the Curé of Ars for one. Measuring that intense heat, one might catch fire and feel perhaps the necessity of living as a Christian. In the days long past when to wear gloves was part of being formally and properly dressed, Barbey d'Aurevilly used to put his on before he sat down to write, out of respect for his craft. Nowadays we get into shirt-sleeves and uncover the typewriter. We are not afraid of the saints any more. There was a peasant plowing his field in France in the dim past on the feast day of the local saint, and he said he was going to plow and had no time for the saint, who would not care. But his hands were as if riveted to the plow and he could not wrench them away, and the oxen marched off with the plow and the peasant, five hot miles down the summer road and into the town of Saintes, well named, and into the church and up to the altar with the plow clanking on the stone floor. And people laughed, but the peasant prayed to be delivered from his plow, and was. We are not afraid of the saints, but we are careful in what we write about the soul of a man who could say: "Humility is truth, nothing else but truth; hence it is the one dignity of life."

It is best to hint at what was the life of that soul by quoting from the *Osservatore Romano* the words of His Holiness Pope Pius XI, spoke on Sunday, February 8, 1931:

"His life was a life made up entirely of prayer, action and work.

"Of prayer! . . . His Holiness said that He considered it a great favor of God more than once to have found himself beside Contardo Ferrini while he was at prayer; and to have prayed with him from the same bench, before the same altar. His bearing was such that it largely justified what has been said of him: 'He prayed like an angel.' "

Wild Horses of the Mojave

Their hooves made a thud and hissing like the ghosts
of waves that once broke there
As suddenly out of the darkness wild horses swept
over the dune.
They came with the hurry of sea waves, checked,
trumpeted, wheeled and played,
And their manes in the toss of the night wind with
a mist of silver were sprayed:
Wild horses of the Mojave, playing under the moon.

We waked in our brief camp and watched them,
wrung by a joy that was nameless.
—There is a dark time coming, sorrow and age
will come soon,
But beauty is ours to remember: how in the night
on the desert
Wild horses of the Mojave go playing under the
moon.

ADELAIDE WILSON ARNOLD.

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MANY RIVERS

By CHARLES PHILLIPS

FOUR of us went for a walk one Saturday afternoon, over the fields toward the river, down the bluffs and along the bank until we came to a green grassy spot where we could sit and talk. We took off our shoes to get the sand and cinders out of them—and left them off for a while; and we "skipped" stones, and did other things that rivers always make boys do, such as pitching dead branches into the stream to watch them float by. The water flowed past us at such a speed that I was reminded of old times in California, when the rivers rise in the winter and come down with such force out of the canyons that you feel as if they might sweep everything away with them—the same rivers that often in the dry season are nothing but sunbaked arroyos, wide beds of white gravel and tawny sand. Perhaps you know Bret Harte's story of the floods of the Sacramento? Bret Harte! How he made the broad deep rivers of the West sweep and flow through the magic of his pen!

Well, here we were, then, sitting on the banks of the St. Joe . . . and suddenly we remembered that it is historic ground and this a historic stream. This is La Salle's river; to us in this part of the country the St. Joe will always be that, the river of La Salle. Not far from where we sat the great French adventurer forded the stream, moving on to penetrate still further into what was then a virginal wilderness. There Father Rebourde blazed the cedar that was to mark the way for other voyageurs—the same cedar which is preserved in relic today in the museum of the Northern Indiana Historical Society at South Bend. How far back all that takes us—to 1679, with La Salle and the Indians under the Council Tree; to Allouez, laying the cornerstone of Christianity in this region of the New World. The old Log Chapel at Notre Dame, dating from 1686; Denonville making his grants in the name of the King of France in 1694; Father Aveneau establishing his mission at Fort St. Joseph in 1690—all these historic memories, and many others, were summoned up as we watched the broad shining river flowing on.

For a little while we were transported to the ancient wilderness. Then we took up our walk again, along the bottom lands, and came to a farmer plowing. He had just turned his first furrow, and I wished then that we hadn't put our shoes on. I wanted to walk in that cool damp furrow and get the feel of the fresh earth on my feet again. I wanted to play at being Knut Hamsun's Isak, of "Growth of the Soil." I stooped down and handled the soft new loam, letting it run between my fingers. What an elemental, primal sensation it gave! A passage from Alexei Tolstoi's "Calvary" came into my mind, the woman Katia saying, "What we want are simpler husbands, more children, and to get nearer to the grass. It's so long since I've walked barefoot in the grass!" And then there is old Boryna, in Reymont's "The Peasants." The death scene of the old Polish peasant in that novel is, to my mind, one of the great epic passages in literature. Boryna in his last delirium wanders in the spring night out into the newly plowed fields. He walks down the furrows; he fills his two hands with the soil; and he goes on, scattering it, as if it were seed, his "god-like gesture of the sower" putting, as it were, a benediction on the fertile earth. He falls at last; and when they discover him and bring him back to his hut to die, clenched tightly in his hands they find the soil that he had loved to the last.

The river seemed a primeval thing then, taking us in thought back to the morning of creation. The plower with his plow bridged the span between wilderness and civilization; and so did the wire fences along the river bank, built right down to the water to separate field from field. Those fences were jammed and packed with earth, leaves and other flotsam from the stream; and they too told their story. They showed how high the water had risen in the early spring when the ice was breaking up. And they spoke of floods, and of the farmer's problem. And we, lineal descendants every one of us of primitive plowmen, even though our heritage of earth might have been lost a thousand years; we, legatees, no matter how remote, of the adventurousness and the zeal of old French explorers and missionaries—what did we talk about then there by the river bank? We talked about Congress, the President, flood control bills and all the troubles that "ol' man river" has been making through the ages.

I knew the mighty Mississippi, when I was a youngster. I was brought up in the sight of rivers; even the brief-lived stream that flowed past our windows spread out, just before it reached the mills of the town, into a wide sweeping sheet, coming around a timbered bend with a majestic flow. That little river found its way soon into the picturesque St. Croix, than which there is no nobler stream in America. And not many miles away the St. Croix fed its broad abundance to the Father of Waters.

I shan't ever forget the first time I saw the Mississippi. Up to that moment it had been only one of the wonders of my school geography. Reading, about that time, with boyish thrills "Stanley in Africa," I had somehow coupled the Mississippi with the wild far-away waters of the Zambesi, so that the home river, so near at hand and yet so far off in my young scheme of adventurous things, had become a symbol to me of strong unexplored worlds. Then at last I beheld it, the great river itself! Life does not hold many more ineffable thrills than this in one's boyhood days. It was not until later, though, when I traveled down the Mississippi on one of the old Diamond Joe side-wheelers that I realized what a mighty thing that river is, the river of Mark Twain's "Life on the Mississippi," which is to me, not only his greatest book, but one of the greatest of all American books. "River of Rivers" the Mississippi might well be called; for as one moves down its stream it grows ever broader, ever wider, until it seems not one river but many, with its world of scattered islands. And one of those islands, one does not forget, was Tom Sawyer's and Huckleberry Finn's. It is not until one sees the Mississippi thus that he can understand what floods really are, or get the full impact of that terrible alarm, "The river's up!"

Rivers in my geography were at all times wonderful to me, and I dreamed and mooned over them in a spirit that did not always, I am afraid, make for good marks from my teacher. Surely they invited my soul, those rivers, making me wander far from the classroom, borne away on mysterious tides. Far? To this day there is magic for me in that one word, Zambesi! Already, as you have seen, I had found my way from the geography to such books as "Stanley in Africa"; and in later years I came, with equal fascination, to Father Zahm's "Up the Orinoco" and "Down the Amazon," in the days when he wrote under the name of Mozansa.

But while I dreamed over the rivers in my geography, I did not dream that some day I would see not a few of those distant and magic streams. To follow the course of the vast plain-dividing Missouri, or to grow to know and love the "lordly Hudson," where it pours its deep tide along the Palisades and past the historic walls of West Point, all this was wonderful enough; and it was to come true. But to go further still? Yet the days were to come when Thames and Avon, Seine, Arno, Tiber, Rhine, Vistula and Dneiper were to be familiar sights.

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And always, whenever I came to one of those far-off rivers, a curious feeling of the old geography book stirred in my memory. When Mark Twain sent Tom Sawyer and Huckleberry Finn across Europe in an airplane, he made them look down on the world below them and try to identify the countries they passed over by the color of the maps in their geographies. I had a feeling akin to that every time I came to a great historic river. The maps, the texts, even to the black-letter titles of the old school book, flashed back to memory. "And am I really seeing the Thames?" (Happy memories of my first Dickens thrill, out of "Our Mutual Friend.") . . . "Am I really on the Seine?" . . . "This is the Arno, then, and it is real!"

Strange that the Thames, in spite of "Our Mutual Friend," did not speak to me half as much of English London as the Avon did. The Avon is all Shakespeare; and Shakespeare is England and old London incarnated. The Thames was old Roman Britain to me. Perhaps that was due to Rudyard Kipling and his "Pook's Hill" stories. But if the Thames did not mean simply London to me, the Seine meant Paris. Likewise it meant Rouen and Joan of Arc; just as Orleans, on the Loire, means the same Blessed Maid. And the Seine means bridges, too; what beautiful bridges they built in the olden days! In Florence, the bridges over the Arno seem, some of them, to be living things spanning the stream, lifting themselves over, humping their backs to let the river run under. I have seen the Arno in such high flood that it was well indeed the bridges "humped their backs." But roar and splash as it might, that torrent-swollen stream had always to me the undertone of a melodious, tragic voice—the voice of Dante.

The echo of Dante's voice sounding over the flooding Arno brings the Tiber to mind, the imperial Roman Tiber at the mouth of which the Divine Poet pictures the embarkation of the souls bound for purgatory. Whoever sees the Tiber should see it first after coming from the Carrara quarries. Then he will get a feeling of what that river really meant to the ancient Romans; for it was up the stream of Tiber that they towed all the fine marble that made the white glory of the Forum. Rome is a yellow city now, all Travertine; but none of us can ever picture ancient Rome save as a galaxy of snow-white temples glittering in the sun. And it was here, then, that Caesar, "upon a raw and gusty day," swam the coffee-colored stream? Three times, the legend says. How then—everyone asks the question—how did Caesar get his clothes on again?

I lived on the Rhine for months, in the days of the Army of Occupation. "A soldier of the legion lay dying in Algiers"—so at last I am come to Bingen-on-the-Rhine! "Ich weiss nicht was soll es bedeuten"—and here is the Lorelei, seen by my very own eyes. So far as sentimental regard is concerned, no foreign river in all the world enters quite so familiarly into our consciousness as the Rhine. But when I laid eyes for the first time on the Vistula, it was not a sense of familiarity that I experienced, but one of complete removal from everything hitherto known. Here I seemed, for the moment, to be removed to the edge of the world. These wide, slow, level waters, long grown tardy after their torrented rush out of the Tatra mountains, flowed into the Baltic. The Baltic Sea! Surely now I had wandered far, far away from the Willow River and my geography days. Yet of all the distant rivers I was to see, I came to know the Vistula best: "our dear river," as the Poles call it. Their great novelist, Zeromski, has written a beautiful book about it with that very title.

And I was to go further still. I was to stand on the heights at Kiev and see the wide Dnieper with its tributary streams—like a scene on the Mississippi—flowing down to Odessa and the Black Sea. And I was to cross it in troublous times, hide in ditches beyond it to take shelter from the flying shrapnel of a Bolshevik cannonade, and witness the burning of its great bridges that lit the sky with a crimson flare and turned the dark waters to sheets of flame. Then indeed did I feel lost from the peaceful currents of the rivers at home, beautiful that they are; and terrible, too, more terrible than war when they swell and rise in their primeval power and break their banks and inundate the little transient things civilization has taught man to build.

THE ABBÉ LUGAN

By ERNEST DIMNET

ABBÉ ALPHONSE LUGAN, whose name was familiar to the readers of THE COMMONWEAL, died toward the end of August at Albi in southern France. He was born in that same district, in 1869; was educated at Castres, and joined the Society of Jesus. The house of studies where he went through his philosophical and theological course was in Spain, and it was there that he acquired the Spanish culture which was one of his chief characteristics. He not only spoke Spanish as his own language, but possessed an intimate knowledge of Spanish literature, especially the authors of the classical periods. His book on Luis de Leon, hurriedly written though it is, shows how soaked he was in the atmosphere of old Spain. He was too alert and pugnacious a man not to take an interest in the politics of such a divided country as Spain was. On this subject his mastery was undisputed. It is not surprising that, with such a background, he should have been at home also in the politics of Mexico, Peru and Argentina. The readers of THE COMMONWEAL surely remember his articles of a few months ago on Mexican affairs. One could count on the fingers of one hand the Europeans with such a grasp on the spirit of Latin America.

In 1905, Abbé Lugan left the Society of Jesus and came to Paris where I made his acquaintance. He was bubbling with interest in the politics of those days and was soon in the thick of the Action Française controversy started a year before by a brilliant young writer, M. Fidac. Nobody ever enjoyed a fight as Abbé Lugan did. With a fund of real kindliness which one could read in his smile, he loved to show his angles and inclined to call a spade not only a spade but a steam-shovel. He made enemies for himself but cared little. The independence and transparency of his life placed him above fear. Readers of his seven volumes on "The Social Teaching of Jesus" know that he was also so well equipped theologically that nobody would have dared to suspect his orthodoxy. Even during the six or seven years of what was called Integrism, he was let alone by people who had no love for him and might have liked to show their ill-will.

The beginning of the present Pontificate gave him his chance. With infinite trouble and thanks to his wonderful perseverance, he succeeded in founding a monthly, *Le Mouvement,* which can hardly survive him, for he almost wrote every line of it. This review was pacifist and democratic, but while its spirit was that of the time of Piux XI, its tone recalled too much that of the days of Leo XIII. Hence its incomplete success. But the editor was never discouraged. He went on teaching, traveling and writing: one wonders how a man who led such an existence managed to produce twenty-seven volumes. On his deathbed he said something about failures. "But my poor life," he added, "has been filled by the love of Christ."

Anybody who came near him was always sure of that. The thought gives something touching to an existence which never wished to be anything except indomitably active.

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COMMUNICATIONS

ECONOMICS AND AUTHORITY

St. Joseph, Mo.

TO the Editor: The world depression, now become an American depression, is showing itself more and more as a breakdown of the whole existing structure of production and distribution, for the system has become a callous method of extracting profits for the few instead of an instrument of service for all. Being without a soul, it is in process of dissolution or, perhaps better put, of stagnation.

A large section of Americans are oblivious of this fact, though the evidence is fast accumulating under their very eyes from month to month. Public measures will eventually come, for while politicians do not think in terms of public interest, some foolish and drastic action is to be expected of them, sooner or later. Agitators and demagogues will see to that.

The winter is approaching and with it an ever-increasing army of the unemployed. Charity seems helpless before the magnitude of the expected disaster, for it is expending itself, with a high service charge, in a dole to pay for articles bought over the counter, or for rents. It is a situation for Catholic Action, but what can we really do? This is a question which our good parish priests of the great cities must ask of themselves many times each day. A general question for the community becomes a special one for the Body of Christ.

In the earliest days of the Church a special need was met by the Apostles themselves, the very companions and eye-witnesses of our Divine Lord. A voluntary communism of the Christians in Jerusalem was recommended as a provisional thing because it was no doubt a necessary thing. Why not expand on the plan today by the establishment of voluntary groups of Catholic families on the land, the source of food and fuel, groups picked, organized and directed by capable volunteers, devoted men and women, backed up by authority?

This would be more difficult of accomplishment in some parts of the country than in others. In Missouri, where not far from the larger centers there is a great quantity of land obtainable for less than $.50 an acre, partly wooded, and good in part and bad in part, the project would seem not so impossible. Authoritative and responsible leadership could surely obtain what was wanted in the way of land, transportation, supplies and tools in short order. And log houses, which are warm in winter and cool in summer, could be put up for less than $150 each, a house for every family.

To plan, to provide and to establish self-supporting colonies may indeed seem impossible of accomplishment, but we must take heart by the memory of Our Lord's compassion on the multitude when their plight was told Him by His Apostles. "Make the men sit down," He said. And He blessed the twelve barley loaves and the few fishes which the Apostles then distributed. Would it not be agreeable to the Heart of Our Divine Lord to see Catholic families, and non-Catholic families as well, taken from the inhuman and unnatural conditions under which they must perforce suffer in the cities, to the hopefulness of directed joint action in the building of self-supporting communities in the simplest and most natural way of all?

Two and one-half bushels of wheat, costing now about $1.00, ground on two stones will make 365 loaves of whole wheat bread. Would not $1.00, plus plan, direction and work amount to much more in some such way than the same $1.00 given in the city?

Such a plan to be realizable must have a great deal of ability behind it, and sufficient ability must be at hand in a nation of super-business men. But the indispensable thing it must have, first of all, is authority.

Authority can command obedience, permanence and all necessary material help. Private initiative might obtain the money and then fail miserably. Catholic families would trust an authoritative enterprise. A bishop or bishops could do it. A great religious order could do it. A Catholic organization of national scope could do it. The land should belong to the authority, as well as all funds and movables. Temporarily at least the groups would be their working guests, and as such could be dismissed when refractory or undesirable. Families, picked for their special abilities as well as for their character, should be chosen for their particular groups.

To become quickly self-supporting in a very simple way, there would necessarily have to be a full utilization of time of the workers, male and female. This means the combination in one man of farming and the practice of an elementary trade, as in Alsace, where the farmers live in villages around church and school, going out a space to their fields as necessary and returning to the village where they practise their trades. Country life, ordered in this manner, is observed to favor a happy Catholic life and the temporal and eternal good of the people.

ALBERT L. C. FRANCE.

USURY AS A NEW ISSUE

New York, N. Y.

TO the Editor: With regard to usury, I quote from Rickaby's "Moral Philosophy," p. 257: "Leo X in the Fifth Council of Lateran, 1515, ruled that 'usury is properly interpreted to be the attempt to draw profit and increment, without labor, without cost, and without risk, out of the use of a thing that does not fructify.'"

I fail to find any ethical support in this definition for Mr. Henry Somerville's contention that interest-taking is unsound. If there is one thing certain to be gathered from reading the daily papers, it is that it is well-nigh impossible to loan money without risk. Mr. Somerville's examples prove not only that it is burdensome to pay interest, but that there is risk in loaning where, at the time, there appears to be no risk.

The generalization that "money is barren" seems to be an attempt to simplify a distressingly complex situation by a slogan. The truth of the matter appears to be, not that money is barren, but that fecundity varies with time and circumstance, and may even become the reverse of fecundity. The Aristotelian equation is, "$1.00 + time = $1.00"; not so long ago the equation was "$1.00 + time = $1.10," or, $1.00 + time = $1.01"; and now, as in Mr. Somerville's examples, $1.00 + time = $.30."

The anti-usury arguments have great appeal at present. But suppose we were in a period of inflation? Suppose the cost of living has tripled in a twelvemonth. A year ago a widow loaned part of her savings to an Aristotelian relation. Today he repays her dollar for dollar with ease, on account of the new price level, but she finds her funds, which a year ago assured a modest living, today mean extreme poverty. Has the Aristotelian repaid the debt? Has the non-payment of interest helped the situation? The generalization, "Money is barren," enables us to give a formal copy-book answer, but I doubt whether Mr. Somerville would be satisfied with it.

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All this is not to say that debt is not today the greatest hindrance to financial recovery—it is. Or that interest charges are not too high—they may be. The trouble is the debts themselves. Most of them should never have been contracted. If it had been impossible to borrow money (with or without interest) there could have been no stock inflation in 1929 and no farm inflation in 1920. Britain could not have stabilized the pound at par, a move which in retrospect appears to have been one of the contributing causes to the depression in England's trade. American consumers could not have bought so many automobiles and radios without the time payment plan.

The "no interest" advocate must also answer the following questions:

1. Who will loan money for nothing, and if he won't, how compel him?

2. How can the functions of insurance companies and savings banks in providing income for those unable to engage in gainful occupations be continued? How about hospitals, schools and the like which depend on income from their endowment funds? Will they have to invest in common stocks in order to get income, and will Mr. Somerville thereupon call for the abolition of their dividends because the owners are absentee owners not expending effort for the development of their property?

3. How can banks earn any money to pay their employees? Who will deposit his money in the bank with the certain knowledge that the bank management is bound to lose on some of the loans it makes and cannot earn money on its assets to balance these losses? The distressing bank situation referred to on page 527 of the September 30 issue of THE COMMONWEAL is due to non-repayment of principal as well as default interest. Or should banks be abolished in the new "no interest" régime?

4. How can rampant inflation, such as threatened the United States in 1920, be stopped?

To repeat, the trouble is not the interest, it is the debts themselves.

VICTOR S. VON SZELISKI.

FREE STATE ECONOMICS

Richmond Hill, L. I.

TO the Editor: Several of your contributors have been endeavoring to prove in your columns, for months past, the "sanity" of the Irish, the "prosperity" of the Free State, and the Free State's economic independence. These people would, no doubt, be very interested in—and possibly very annoyed by—the article that appeared recently in the London *Evening Standard*, under the name of John W. Dulanty, His Majesty's Free State High Commissioner in London.

Mr. Dulanty made a few brilliant discoveries, but his article was never intended for Irish or Irish-American consumption. He wrote: "In spite of the general depression of trade all over the world, Irish purchases of British manufactured goods in the first half of the present year showed substantial increases in many directions over the corresponding period of last year. On the other side of the account, however, it is regrettable to note a drop in the purchases by Great Britain of our bacon and hams, butter, eggs and poultry."

He points out, further, that for the first half of the current year, the United States of America purchased, per head of her population, goods from Great Britain to the value of $2.00. Denmark, for the same period, and on the same basis, purchased goods from Great Britain to the value of $14.00. The Irish Free State, for the same period, and on the same basis, purchased from Great Britain goods to the value of $60.75.

These figures certainly are not indicative of sanity or economic independence on the part of the Free State. The export figures would make very interesting reading but, unfortunately, Mr. Dulanty did not see fit to publish them. He does assure his readers, however, that there is a marked decrease in Britain's purchases of Irish agricultural produce.

The story is the same today as it has ever been. England controls all Irish ports and, since there is not a single Irish ship afloat, Irish agricultural producers are dependent on the good-will of British shipping interests for the marketing of their produce. The absence of a national mercantile marine prevents them from seeking new markets. Britain takes just as much as she wants of Irish produce, at her own price, and, since there is no competition, she charges exorbitant freight rates. In return she dumps annually into Ireland, millions of pounds worth of the surplus products of her manufacturing centers. In the importation of these goods she gets preferential tariff rates. The goods are mostly inferior in manufacture and are the products of sweated labor. It has been stated time and time again, by authorities on economics and industry, that the great bulk of these imported goods could be produced in Ireland. The Free State government, however, is so loyal to the empire that it refuses to protect Irish interests, and practically every industry in the Free State is controlled by British capital.

MICEAL O'KIERSEY.

EBB TIDE

Albany, N. Y.

TO the Editor: Mr. Burton Kline's article on magazine fiction, in your issue of September 30, puts too much emphasis on the evil effect of the concentration of periodical publishing in New York. It would perhaps be better if magazines were published at scattered points, but the real trouble lies in Mr. Kline's other charge—commercialization. This condition would exist no matter where the magazines were published.

In connection with the subject, there is a quite peculiar circumstance, which is not mentioned in the article. This is the fact that there does not exist in this country one prominent magazine devoted to good original fiction. One may sometimes find excellent stories in the fiction magazines, but always sandwiched in with many commercial or commonplace specimens.

America shares with France the honor of first developing the short story. This form of fiction is today very popular with us; and we have a vast population from which to draw both good writers and discriminating readers. For these reasons it might be thought that at least one short-story monthly could subsist and attain a circulation (in normal times) of, perhaps, seventy-five thousand or one hundred thousand. Such a periodical would confine itself to no one type of story, but be open to a wide variety, if written with sincerity and sufficient talent to make them distinctive.

But a magazine of this sort is conspicuous by its absence, and that is a rather humiliating fact.

FRANK P. MOTHERSELL.

CATHOLICS AND GRADUATE STUDY

Weston, Mass.

TO the Editor: May I take a little space to thank Mr. John R. Hill for his correction of the mistake in my letter to your esteemed magazine of recent date? Marquette University reported only three students engaged in chemical research, not twenty-three as asserted in my letter. I regret the error.

REV. M. J. AHERN, S.J.

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THE PLAY

By RICHARD DANA SKINNER

The House of Connelly

THERE are three reasons why "The House of Connelly" marks an important moment in the current theatrical season. First of all, the play is by Paul Green, that North Carolina student of racial problems whose play "In Abraham's Bosom" was a recent Pulitzer Prize winner. Then, there is the fact that the play has been staged by an entirely new producing group whose long preparation for the present task has caused many comments and surmises to drift back to Broadway. Lastly, almost any play of reasonable distinction would be important in a season marked, up to this time at least, by singular ineptitude and mediocrity.

Paul Green rightly takes rank among the foremost five or six playwrights of the country. He first achieved public attention through the publication in book form of a number of his short plays on Negro life, the collection taking its title from one of the plays, "Lonesome Road." In these short plays Mr. Green showed a particular sympathy with the problems of the educated Negro arising from the antagonism of his own race. Admittedly, he was writing chiefly of a particular group of Negroes in a rather limited territory who had come under his close observation over a period of years. But in writing of these people, he managed to strike many universal notes. Another problem that interested him was the struggle within the Negro's own character between an ambition for education and advancement and a passionate and poorly disciplined animal nature. The war between the higher and the lower nature was sharply and often brutally dramatized. In Mr. Green's first long play, "In Abraham's Bosom," which grew out of some of these shorter ones, he took up a third theme, namely the problem of a mulatto with a perpetual inner war being waged between white blood and dark. Today we find Mr. Green turning his attention away from his specialty and toward the recurrent tragedy of the impoverished white aristocracy of the South. "The House of Connelly" is written distinctly in the Chekov pattern, as if that Russian genius had suddenly found himself in the deep South and had written a play of its characters in much the same spirit in which he wrote "Uncle Vanya."

Although this play will undoubtedly be one of the candidates for this year's Pultizer Prize, because of the distinction of its writing and the admirable quality of its production and because it is so obviously a play that springs from native American traditions and circumstances, it is hard to see wherein, as a dramatic achievement, it can be ranked with "In Abraham's Bosom," Only a few of its characters are thoroughly developed. The rest are more or less routine types. I am speaking, of course, of the written lines of the play and not of the characterization supplied by the very capable group of actors. They managed to contribute an individuality of feeling which is not indicated in the lines themselves. Moreover, without pretending to be any expert on Southern types, I have a very strong conviction that many of the characters in the play are exaggerated to a point that would almost make them caricatures unless they were extremely well acted.

The theme of the play is the need of new blood, new energy and a new sense of realities to restore the disintegrated aristocracy of the far South. The plot built around this theme concerns the weakling son of a proud old family who sees everything going to pieces about him, and also feels the remnants of his own character disintegrating until he meets the poor daughter of one of his own tenants, a vigorous and aggressive type of peasant girl who can bring to him the qualities he utterly lacks. His family, of course, object to his interest in this girl, and it is not until his crochety old uncle has committed suicide, until his mother has died from the shock, and until the girl herself pleads with him that he realizes the need of marrying her and through her starting a new day for the house of Connelly. After the marriage, even his sisters desert the house, feeling that he has disgraced the family name. The play, however, ends on a note of strength in a scene between husband and wife in which they find in their complete loneliness a promise of all that they may learn to achieve together.

In the telling of this story, Mr. Green has used the slow and deliberate methods of Chekov, but has failed, except in the case of a few of the characters, to give those revealing flashes of individuality which make Chekov's work surpeme in its type. Mr. Green has also found it necessary to use a kind of realism which the superior artistry of Chekov would have disdained as a sign of weakness. The usual blasphemies of modern realism spatter the dialogue, and certain degrading depths in the nature of the male members of the Connelly line are indicated by way of needless elaboration rather than through dramatic necessity. Mr. Green, of course, shows a good deal of hot fury against that double standard which has bred the race of mulattos on the one hand and bred all the romantic chivalry toward the white woman on the other. It is perhaps because of his preoccupation with this essential injustice that he feels it necessary to bring in this theme so frequently. Certainly, it has little or nothing to do with the essential problem of the play, which is solely the need of new vitality and of new courage among many of the Southern whites themselves.

All in all, I am inclined to think that by far the most important aspect of "The House of Connelly" is the exhibit it provides of the excellent accomplishments of the Group Theatre. After much hesitation and discussion, the Theatre Guild finally condescended to sponsor this effort of the Group Theatre, which is really a separate organization. All one can say is that if the Theatre Guild had spent more of its time delving into its own shortcomings and less into the Group Theatre's accomplishments, the Guild's own season might have started off much more propitiously than it did with Savoir's "He." The Group Theatre consists of a number of professionals, a few of whom have been associated in the past with Theatre Guild productions, who decided that there was still room for an honest repertory theatre in New York built around a group of young and hard-working actors without too many isms and with a plentiful supply of common sense.

This group of artists spent practically the entire summer in rehearsing "The House of Connelly" and in studying the technique necessary for even the most minor characterizations. The result is an amazingly well-modulated performance carried out with a perfection of detail that is at once unobtrusive and pervasive. We are always aware of it, but never unpleasantly aware of it.

Among the individual actors of this new company, Franchat Tone carries the heaviest burden as the young master of the Connelly plantation. His performance is both dramatic and

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simple, although I do have a feeling that he exaggerates a trifle the weakness and despondency and the utter lack of self-reliance of the character. After all, there should be some hint even in the early scenes of the qualities which promise to be rescued and brought forth in the last scene. Mr. Tone's work is quite the equal of his accomplishment of last year in "Green Grow the Lilacs." The part of the peasant girl is taken by Margaret Barker, who made a memorable impression on New York audiences last year by her playing of the rebellious daughter, Henrietta, in "The Barretts of Wimpole Street. In physical action and in dramatic force, Miss Barker is more than adequate to the task. Her playing, however, lacks variety and nearly everything she says is poured out in a torrent. It sometimes becomes a little difficult to understand her.

In lesser rôles, Stella Adler and Eunice Stoddard do very well as the forlorn younger sisters of the family. Morris Carnowsky, who has played many important rôles with the Theatre Guild, takes the part of the disreputable old uncle. He makes it much more of a Russian than a Southern character. Mary Morris, who plays the part of the aged mother, gives an excellent technical performance in all outer aspects, but her speech is almost inaudible—a criticism which is true of perhaps half of the company. This may be due in part to the very lengthy rehearsals in a smaller auditorium. It is an attempt to carry naturalism beyond the effective limits of the theatre.

The directors of this production deserve a great deal of credit for the admirable smoothness of the play, for the well-varied pace and for the expert handling of several crowded and tumultuous scenes. Even after all the deductions are made for the shortcomings I have mentioned, this production remains one of the outstanding theatrical achievements of the last few months. Because of its production, the play itself emerges with more distinction than its text alone would merit. (At the Martin Beck Theatre.)

Payment Deferred

THIS play by Jaffrey Dell, based on the novel by C. S. Forrester, is probably one of the best plays of its kind seen on Broadway in a long time. It is not the kind of play, however, that one hopes to see very often, as it delves with terrifying fidelity into every thought, mood and action of a British bank clerk who has murdered his rich nephew and buried the corpse in the backyard of his own house. The play pictures the dissolution of his character which follows and the ultimate irony of his arrest for the murder of his own wife when, in fact, as the audience knows, she had committed suicide. There is very little to alleviate the grim horror of the whole affair.

The play does serve, however, to bring to these shores Charles Laughton, an English actor, who for the perfection of his technique can be compared only to a combination of Walter Connolly and Edward G. Robinson on our own stage. In appearance he is like Connolly and in supreme mastery of technique and ability to sink into the depths of character, he is like Robinson. The shifty, pulp-like character he has created in this play is masterly in every detail. He uses his body, his face, his hands, his voice, and in perfect accord, until he achieves a power of pantomime which tells the audience far more than any spoken words of the play. He brought to mind the character of Mr. Crispin in "The Man with Red Hair." I was not surprised then to find on a program note that Mr. Crispin was one of his character creations on the English stage. It is sincerely hoped that we shall soon have the opportunity to see Mr. Laughton in a play with less mental sadism than "Payment Deferred." (At the Lyceum Theatre.)

BOOKS

Moscow and Asia

Russia and the Soviet Union in the Far East, by Victor a Yakhontoff. New York: Coward-McCann, Incorporated. $5.00.

ONE OF the important phenomena of present-day discussion of international relations is that people are writing and uttering today racial and group opinions we neither knew nor sought thirty years ago. Until the World War brought home to everybody that something was wrong, the ideas of nearly everybody who thought about these things at all, were influenced by the ideas and practices of the maritime empires.

Russia, in that still recent period, was one of the great unknown quantities; partly because of ignorance of the Russian language; partly because of the partizan prejudices or enmities of those writing about Russian things; partly because czarist Russia discouraged foreign "observers" as Soviet Russia discourages them today. Russian sources have always been suspect to many who would be students of Russia. Mr. Yakhontoff announces his book as trying to fill that gap in some measure.

His first section gives an outline of the manner in which Russia came to the Far East and of the development of relations with China and Japan up to the World War. In that seventeenth-century advance of Russia to the Pacific, Americans might see analogy at some points with the manner in which we came to the Southwest and with our own march to the Pacific coast from the opposite direction two centuries later.

In the development of regular national relations, there is a notable difference (and the author emphasizes it) between those that grew between Russia and China, and those between Russia and Japan. The author claims, as Count Witte did, traditional "good, neighborly relations" between Russia and China. There is a warrant for that, in spite of mutual aggression, and occasional barbarity. At least there was no mystery about it, on either side. Abuses were of a nature easily understood by both; out of them no deep-rooted hatred grew, such as has characterized the feelings of other peoples about each other. I take that point he makes to be really the essence of the setting he arranges in the first section of his book, for the events of the second section, "New Russia—U.S.S.R.—in the Far East."

To some degree Russians are warranted in this claim to better understanding of "the Asiatic mind," in spite of their notorious misconception, for example, of the mind of Japan. Russia lies across the two continents: the eastern portion is inhabited in places by Asiatic tribes; the western part was strongly influenced not only by the Byzantine Empire, but by the Mongol invasions beginning historically about 1223, whatever may have gone before that. There has never been any "color line" against Asiatics, and consequently there has been considerable mixture of blood, voluntarily, or in the course of the centuries of mutual raiding, and during the subjection of Russians to Mongol suzerainty. At least the claim is valid that there ought to be better understanding of the Asiatic mind by Russians than by most western European peoples.

The author is right in dating some semblance of order in national interrelations from the Treaty of Nerchinsk in 1689. Russia was the pioneer in treaty-making with the Chinese Empire. I wonder if he is right in omitting to mention the influence of a European Jesuit, on the side of China on that occasion, in making this first treaty on the European model. That is an historical fact, and an important one for those very "good, neighborly relations" on which he bases his book.

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He does strengthen his thesis by pointing out the potency in Asia of "the doctrine on which the present régime of the Soviet Union is built [which] declares quite emphatically that all races are equal and should be treated as such."

Russia's rôle in the Far East as a part of the problem of the Pacific Ocean is the subject of the third part of this book. The author does not speculate as to what that rôle may become, but is content to point out that it cannot be considered a menace since it is not moved either by economic imperialism nor by desire for territorial expansion, but aims only at the coöperative betterment of mankind. He does not speculate as to the possible extent of human betterment on an anti-religious basis. There are people who will differ with him there.

It is a readable book and might serve well as part of the study program of such bodies as the Asia Committee of the Catholic Association for International Peace.

WILLIAM FRANKLIN SANDS.

Manhattan

New York, by Paul Morand. New York: Henry Holt and Company. $2.50.

East of the Hudson, by J. Brooks Atkinson. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, Incorporated. $2.50.

This New York of Mine, by Charles Hanson Towne. New York: Cosmopolitan Book Corporation. $3.00.

PAUL MORAND'S book on New York is the most transporting of the three; it is a transport to New York, since M. Morand came the longest way of all three authors to observe and write. By the same token of distance and its inherent perspective, the dullest of the three under review here is Mr. Towne's. It is awfully insular: a New Yorker at the center of things. In between lies Mr. Atkinson's vision of New York: a desultory study of kinetic motion.

The erstwhile French diplomat's insight into the city of evening lights is acute indeed, though it is often enough quite precious. This latter fault may be merely a seeming fault to a native son (such as the present reviewer is), for the book was apparently inspired by its Paris market possibilities, where it has sold 100,000 copies, according to the jacket blurb. No native son, for instance, can sincerely care for the food dispensed by our cheap chain-restaurants, his knowledge of which must be of the constrained sort. Yet M. Morand writes of these nickel coffee places with appreciation of both food and price. This, however, is straining a point in a book of many excellent and illuminating points. The book has three chapters, "Downtown," "Midtown" and "Uptown." For once a writer about the town has had the sense to view Park Avenue above 96th Street, for this aspect of the avenue is typical of the "sharp broken intensities" of the city. Various aspects of New York, such as ghettos and theatres, harbors and art movements, Sing Sing prison and bridges, speakeasies and orange-drink stands, Negro life in Harlem and ladies' hotels, are caught not only in the letter but in the spirit.

The book is translated by the distinguished Hamish Miles; and is illustrated by Joaquin Vaquero, a young Spanish architect and painter. These rather flat drawings show a confused grasp of the city, and will give prospective visitors a twisted view of New York.

"East of the Hudson" is by a newspaper man—the dramatic critic of the New York *Times*. But Mr. Atkinson's view of the city, about whose drama he is an honored chronicler, is a dormer-window view—almost as collegian as the view from a New England college dormitory: Brooks suit: spectacles; essay-

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NEXT WEEK

RETURNING TO REALITY, by George K. McCabe, while dealing straightforwardly with many matters in the present disturbed economic order, yet does point a way out. This is not only a possible, but also a probable, course of events which though trying will lead to those happy days when we shall speak of the business depression, the author says, as the "late unpleasantness." . . . SAINT JOAN'S QUINCENTENARY, by Barbara Barclay Carter, describes briefly the efforts being undertaken in England to make honorable amend for England's share in Saint Joan's death, and in detail the organization and activities of Saint Joan's Social and Political Alliance in England for "the furtherance of the usefulness of Catholic women as citizens," and the accomplishment of such "political acts of mercy" as may be achieved by legislative reform. This should be of particular interest in this country where it has been recently pointed out the influence of Catholics in politics is unproportioned to their numbers. . . . A YANKEE IN KING OSSIAN'S COURT, by Bertrand K. Hart, is a most delightfully intimate and anecdotal account of pleasant hours with Irish artists whose names are now legend: Yeats, Colum, A. E., Patrick Campbell, Gogarty, O'Flaherty, Lennox Robinson, Winifred Letts and others; together with a hint of the country that has been their inspiration. . . . PITFALLS OF CRITICISM, by Richard Burton, should haunt those who are prone to form hasty opinions of literary merit or demerit. Getting on from amazing examples of critical bad judgment, the writer analyzes the bases for literary tastes and the likely divergences. . . . MODERN ITALIAN CATHOLIC WRITERS, by Igino Giordani, of the Vatican library, is a fascinating and valuable treatment of its subject.

istic; and unsophisticated in the delightful way of Morand or the undelightful way of Towne. As a youth, Mr. Atkinson read of New York in the old *Post* and the old *Sun*; he couldn't have had finer teachers of the art of daily life as pursued in the big town. He read these both for pleasure and with a view to becoming a newspaper feature-writer. He read of New York from afar—from New England—and he became sentimental about the names of districts hereabouts. Who that has been an avid book-taster does not recognize the sensation? Now that Mr. Atkinson has seen the town that captured his wistful imagination, he makes it plain that he'd rather walk in our parks than ride in our high-speed elevators to the tops of the Chrysler or Empire State buildings, there to view tiny humanity way below. He'd rather see them eye to eye in the parks or across the footlights. It is a superb story of New York—for New Englanders to read. I hardly think it would excite a New Yorker.

"This New York of Mine" is quite nobody else's New York. For doubtless nobody but Charles Hanson Towne would have such a town. Sentimental persons will embrace this volume of New York "mauverry," will revel in the revealings of Mr. Towne. It is a confectioner's plum tart. Mr. Towne ought to sit down and write his hymn to New York all over again—after he has taken another whirl about town for freshening purposes. Then let him write a simple and factual account of the events within his personal ken that have book value.

WALTER V. ANDERSON.

"That Predestined Victim"

The Tragic Queen: A Study of Mary Queen of Scots, by Andrew Dakers. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Company. $5.00.

THE much-maligned Mary Stuart has been vindicated by several honest historians—notably by Andrew Lang, Sir John Skelton, Dr. Hay Fleming. As far as I know none of these three were Catholics, nor is her latest champion, Mr. Dakers, a Catholic. Of all Mary Stuart's defenders, Mr. Dakers seems to me the best. He is apparently possessed not only of a generous spirit, but of a legally accurate mind which enables him to advance slowly and temperately, without undue hysteria, and without bitterness. He has stated the case, once and for all. His book is a very fine contribution to the Marian controversy, to the relations of Scotland with England from 1560 to 1587, and to popular history in general.

There is no "mystery" of Mary Stuart, to employ Lang's phrase, but there is a tragedy. From her very birth, she had insidiously arrayed against her, three forces, any one of which taken alone would have been redoubtable, and which taken together, were irresistible: the preacher Knox, who hated her because she was Catholic; her base half-brother, Moray, who hated her because he wanted her place; Queen Elizabeth, who hated her for reasons of feminine and dynastic rivalry. The Scots lords, who should have formed her support against this deadly antagonism, made themselves its agents. There was not one whom she could trust save Bothwell, the pretext for her ultimate downfall, and it is a sufficient comment on the others that this gross scoundrel appears to have been the best of the lot. Their persecution of her, pursued by abject cajolery, the murder of her secretary and of her husband, the iniquitous forced marriage with Bothwell, perfidy and treason, including forgery of her letters, was consummated in nineteen years' illegal imprisonment, and execution by order of Elizabeth.

The principal fact of the Scottish queen's appalling life and death was her devotion to the Catholic faith. As Mr. Dakers

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reminds us in a passage of capital irony, had Mary joined the church of Moray and Knox, she might have had some difficulty in functioning as a Christian ruler. "She would have had to persecute as a Christian duty; she would have had to approve Knox's act for the execution of all adulteresses, ignoring all mention of Christ's tenderness to the woman taken in adultery. She would have had to admit that 'Blessed are they which are persecuted for rightousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven' was nonsense, and act upon Knox's dictum: 'Blessed be they which persecute . . .'" Instead she, alone among the sovereigns of her time, inaugurated in Scotland a policy of toleration, just two hundred years before toleration was allowed (and then incompletely) in England; and she paid for her Christianity by losing her crown.

As for Mary's captivity in England, its story would make almost unendurable reading, were it not illuminated by the white splendor of her spirit. On the morning of her execution, "she told him [the sheriff] without resentment what she had been expecting day by day for nineteen years; anyhow she was no good now, and of no use to anyone. Certainly she was a queen born and anointed . . . but all her life she had known only sorrow. She admitted being quite ready and happy to shed her blood for her Saviour and her Creator . . . and for the Catholic Church." Then placing her hand on a New Testament, she said, "I have never desired the death of the queen, or endeavored to bring it about, or that of any other person." The Earl of Kent broke in to question the validity of an oath made upon a Catholic Bible, and advised Mary to embrace the true religion, offering her the Dean of Peterborough as an adviser. She thanked him, and asked for a priest of her own faith, which was denied. Then the earl exclaimed: "Your life would be the death of our religion, your death will be its life." A few moments later, with words of pardon for her enemies in England and in her own land, Mary said: "Even as Thy arms, O Jesus, were extended on the Cross, so receive me into the arms of Thy mercy!" It was all over.

CUTHBERT WRIGHT.

English Laughter

The Development of English Humour, by Louis Cazamian. New York: The Macmillan Company. $2.00.

HERE is the miracle of a scholar writing about humor, and possessing it. There are few subjects Louis Cazamian treats, on which he does not stamp the distinction of his own fine mind, a mind deeply learned in both English and French literatures and philosophy, yet exquisitely balanced, and human. The present excursion into the origins and development of a quality that sad souls even deny to the English altogether, is made up of lectures given in the University College of Wales. Incidentally it is a subject little written about either in England, or outside. And even though the writer's weight may from time to time rest a little heavily on the arm of Henri Bergson, certainly no one is better fitted than this professor of English literature in the University of Paris properly to appreciate English humor, or to discuss its French roots.

Humor, in this view, is not every aspect of the comic; it is a province within that empire. It is a certain twist, a queer reserve, an inappropriateness, and an unconsciousness of what we may feel all the time to be the case. It presupposes a mastery of one's own reactions, a shrewdness that perceives the actual paradoxes of experience, the agility required to think simultaneously on different planes. The result is a "delicious release in extravagance" which is among the soothing values of art and thought.

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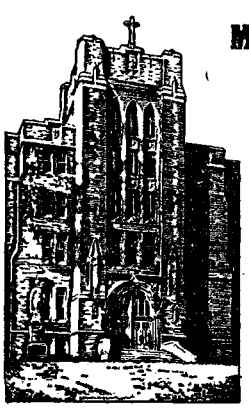

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Sisters of St. Dominic

The middle ages wrote a fascinating first chapter in the history of English humor. The unhappy monk of whom we read in the Lincoln Episcopal Visitations of 1440, who "climbed up a gate to behold pipers and dancers in the yard of the parish church," and was penanced by an indignant abbot to recite a nocturn of psalms in reparation for his fault, was, abbot or no abbot, in the full tide of the spirit of his age. There are few pieces of literature in which exquisite pathos and a serene tenderness are more beautifully mingled than in the Winchester Ordo for the Feast of the Boy Bishop. Yet the same queer reserve, the heavenly appropriateness and unappropriateness of the versicles and responses make the Office ripple with such silent laughter that it forms not merely one of the civilized documents of the English race, but an example of the most cultivated humor. "The Harrowing of Hell" and the Towneley "Noah" are different, yet also high points of pre-Chaucerian humor.

Chaucer is, of course, the supreme test and proof of kinship between mediaeval English culture and the older civilization of France. In him English humor not merely becomes mature; it has hardly known so various or sustained a blossoming since, even in Sterne or Shakespeare. Certainly no one from Shakespeare to George Meredith has surpassed the delicacy of "Troilus and Criseyde." Not even Falstaff overshadows the Wife of Bath. And not even Chaucer himself ever bettered his own archness in the "Nun's Priest's Tale" where the testy cock reproves his hen,

> "For al so siker as *In principio,*
> Mulier est hominis confusio;
> Madame, the sentence of this Latin is—
> Womman is mannes joye and al his blis."

Professor Cazamian promises to complete his survey in two more volumes, the first of which will close with the Renaissance, and the second begin with the eighteenth century and close with the present. This is an important book. Even in its present and necessarily unfinished state it deserves a place next and perhaps above George Meredith's "Essay on the Comic Spirit."

SPEER STRAHAN.

Hardscrabble Farm

Letters from Fraternity, by A. L. McCorrison; introduction by Ben Ames Williams. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, Incorporated. $3.00.

THESE letters are anything but the work of a country gentleman with an amateurish interest in farming, or of a de Crèvecoeur on the lookout for copy in every bite of the plow. The man who wrote them was first and last a dirt farmer, a fork and shovel farmer. Artless and unpretending, they are made up of what one might expect: the daily round of a Maine farmer—and of something more. Although they cover only the latter years of his life, in a handful of them we seem to hold his whole story, and the story of his wife, and of Hardscrabble Farm. Then, fragment by fragment, we get a still bigger history—the decline of a countryside. Farms are abandoned, briars grow in the yards of deserted schoolhouses, moose and wildcats appear in forests where they have not been seen in seventy years. A change comes in the temper of the younger people. There are desertions for the cities. There are, suddenly, suicides. Everything that one could want in a novel is here, except the solemn literary language, and the novelist's often tiresome omniscience.

Hardscrabble Farm never gave a man a chance at the American standard, but farmer McCorrison never considered leaving

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it. He liked his small corner of Maine; liked everything about it; the older he grew the better he liked it, and nothing that he read or heard could persuade him there was another land he could like as well. He was a hard-working man, and usually a happy one, for good reasons. He had an eye for the smallest unfolding of nature, he had a sense of humor, and he had the quick imagination which belongs to children, hermits, and farmers who like their jobs.

Yet the old man did not think himself exceptional. His older neighbors, as he describes them, are men like himself. They live as he lives, think as he does; they are interested in what interests him. They hunt and fish and subdue their farms; they watch the life of the woods as if they were a part of it. In one way or another the familiar round produces for them something unfamiliar, stimulating, full of wonder. And so farmer McCorrison seldom or never complains of boredom, work, hardship, lack of theatres, lack of modern conveniences, lack of excitement. The only thing he rebels against is old age. That, indeed, makes him very angry. It is not less of this farm life that he wants, but more. All he can get. An eternity of it would be just about right.

The last letters are bitter sweet. On the one hand, his excitement, keen as ever, over his brooks and lakes and the change of the seasons; on the other, his bewilderment at old age. In his seventies he still hunted, fished, and worked long hours; still a strong man, but an old one. The fact was a torment. Better for him if like an Indian he could have forgotten his birthdays.

VINCENT ENGELS.

Catholic Statistics

The Ecclesiastical Handbook for Catholic Germany, by the Central Bureau for Ecclesiastical Statistics. Cologne, Germany: Gilde Verlag. 12 marks.

THE PURPOSE of this yearbook is to serve as a lexicon of present-day church history. It aims to present to the reading public the condition of the Catholic Church of today. It gives a complete account of the civil and ecclesiastical legislation and by statistical methods it searches into the internal social and religious movements of the German population.

In particular, the yearbook contains a number of most valuable contributions on the school question, the foreign missions, the social activities, the number and distribution of the Catholic clergy and of the members of the religious orders. The chapter on "The Development of the Religious Culture amongst Germans Abroad" is naturally of particular interest, but I cannot pass by without remarking that the part on the United States is absolutely inadequate.

The chapter on the administration of the sacraments reveals most startling facts. The number of converts throughout Germany, for 1929, does not reach nine thousand. This number is unfortunately offset by the ugly leak of almost forty-three thousand persons who apostatized from the Catholic Church. Another item of interest is this: Of the twenty millions of Catholics, there are only twelve millions who fulfilled their Easter duty. A most disheartening chapter is that on mixed marriages, for only about 36 percent of the mixed marriages, in 1929, were solemnized before a Catholic priest, and in the same year, only 46 percent of the children from mixed marriages were baptized in the Catholic Church. These figures speak a language of their own.

I recommend the yearbook to all seriously interested in the religious conditions of Germany.

ADOLPH DOMINIC FRENAY.

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Of THE COMMONWEAL, published weekly, at New York, N. Y., for Oct. 1, 1931, state of New York, County of New York, ss.

Before me, a Notary Public, in and for the State and county aforesaid, personally appeared John F. McCormick, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Business Manager of THE COMMONWEAL and that the following is to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411, Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

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JOHN F. McCORMICK,
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Sworn to and subscribed before me this 2nd day of October, 1931.

MARY L. COONEY,
(My commission expires March 30, 1932.)

Briefer Mention

A Quarter Century of Learning; edited by Dixon Ryan Fox. New York: Columbia University Press. $3.50.

ONE AND a half dozen Columbia University professors agreed some time ago to sketch the progress made during the past twenty-five years in their departments of study. The results are published herewith. Professor Hayes deals with historical method and popularization of its findings, seeing both things in just perspective. The survey of economics by Professor Mitchell is very helpful reading in these addled times, showing as it does that the disciples of Adam Smith are hard at work and not too distraught. Elsewhere in this book optimisim and pessimism regarding the advancement actually being made pretty well counterbalance. There are chapters on letters, classical studies, the sciences, education, government and jurisprudence. The volume is of value to all American teachers, even if it is not uniformly faithful to its own best moments.

Seven Days, by Andreas Latzko; translated by Eric Sutton. New York: The Viking Press. $2.50.

SINCE Herr Latzko devotes the latter half of his book to socialistically inclined theorizing, the adventure element of his forepart must be regarded as somewhat in the nature of a decoy. This might be excused if the reader were thus coaxed into the perusal of something more profound than Baron Mangin's conversion to a newer and more benevolent attitude toward the workmen in his vast automobile plant. Leaving off, then, at the end of book two, one will have a story which, while not of startling originality, is deftly welded into an absorbing and thoroughly enjoyable whole.

Saint Catherine of Siena, by Alice Curtayne. New York: The Macmillan Company. $1.50.

THIS is an inexpensive edition of a deservedly popular life of a remarkable sainted woman who determined events in a most important and colorful epoch of history. The biography has justly been hailed "a masterpiece of literary art and of historical criticism." Besides having solid merits, it is essentially readable and fascinating. The present edition is cheap only in price, being well printed on good paper, and nicely bound.

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